

Shopping Plus

Friday, December 21, 2001

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Appetizer teasers: hors d'oeuvres can be among the best parts of holiday parties

BY SYLVIA RECTOR
PHOTO BY ROGER NEWSPAPERS

Most tempting foods on the party table aren't huge hams, turkey legs or pans of lasagna. They're small morsels with big flavors and bright colors, the oh-so-rich dips and spreads, creamy spreads, who can resist a tender, smoky barbecue riblet or the rich cream of a plump sea scallop, served on a convenient appetizer platter? Does anyone say no to a little tart holiday who-knows-what-salad?

3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, divided



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PARMESAN CHEESE STRAWS

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out the pastry to 6-by-20 inches. Whisk together the egg yolk and water. Brush the pastry with some of the egg mixture. Sprinkle the pastry with paprika and 2 tablespoons of the Parmesan. Spread the cheese with your hands to evenly cover the pastry. Fold the pastry in half crosswise and press down. Use a rolling pin if necessary to seal layers.

Brush the folded pastry with the egg mixture. Sprinkle on the remaining cheese and press into the top layer. With a sharp knife, cut the pastry into 1/2-inch strips. Hold the ends of each strip between your fingers and twist the ends in opposite directions. Lay twisted strips onto greased baking sheets. Bake until crisp and golden, about 7 minutes. Remove from oven and cool on wire racks. Serve warm or at room temperature.

The straws can be baked up to 3 days in advance. Store in an airtight container at room temperature. Crisp in a preheated 400-degree oven for 3 minutes.

Makes 40 straws.
From "Hors D'Oeuvres" by Eric Treuille and Victoria Blashford-Snell (DK Publishing, \$19.95)

TOMATO, BASIL AND OLIVE TARTLETS
Shortening for baking sheet

4 ounces Emmentaler cheese, grated to yield 1 1/3 cups, see cook's note

3 medium wine-ripened tomatoes, seeded and chopped into 1/4-inch pieces

1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh basil, divided

2 ounces (about 25) black olives, pitted and thinly sliced into strips

3 large eggs

1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon milk

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Favorite 1 1/2-inch tartlet shells such as phyllo shells, see cook's note

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.



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TOMATO, BASIL AND OLIVE TARTLETS

In a medium bowl, toss together the cheese, tomatoes, 2 tablespoons of the basil and the olives.

In a small bowl, whisk together the eggs and the milk. Add the salt and pepper.

Place the tartlet shells on a lightly greased baking sheet. Fill each shell with about 1 teaspoon of the tomato mixture and top each with 2 teaspoons of the egg mixture. (For easier filling, pour the mixture from a glass measure.)

Bake until the filling is golden and set, about 16 minutes, rotating the baking sheets halfway through for even browning. Transfer the tartlets to a wire rack to cool. Sprinkle the tartlets with the remaining basil. Serve warm or at room temperature. Makes about 60 tartlets.

Cook's note: Emmentaler is a cow's-milk cheese with a nutty, mild flavor. Any Swiss-style cheese with small holes may be substituted. Miniature phyllo shells work well. Look for them in your grocery's freezer section.

Adapted from "Martha Stewart's Hors D'Oeuvres Handbook" (Clarkson Potter, \$35)

SMOKED SALMON TEA SANDWICHES WITH DILL BUTTER

24 slices of cocktail bread

4 ounces of dill butter (see cook's note)

48 thinly sliced cucumber rounds

8 ounces thinly sliced smoked salmon, coarsely chopped, divided

Small dill sprigs for garnish

Place the bread on a serving tray. Butter each slice with about 1 teaspoon of the butter. Top each bread slice with 2 thin slices of cucumber. Evenly divide the salmon and place on top of the cucumber. Garnish with a dill sprig and serve. Makes 24 appetizers.

Cook's note: To make dill butter, place 1 stick of softened, unsalted butter in a medium bowl. Add 1/4 cup softened cream cheese, 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind, 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, 2 tablespoons chopped parsley and 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt. Combine all the ingredients using the back of a fork or a wooden spoon. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Adapted from "Martha Stewart's Hors D'Oeuvres Handbook" (Clarkson Potter, \$35)

STEAK AU POIVRE CROSTINI

2 1/2 tablespoons olive oil, divided

1 pound center-cut beef tenderloin, trimmed

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1/4 cup cognac or brandy

1 1/2 cups reduced sodium beef broth

2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream

24 crostini (little toasts — see



J. KYLE KEENER/DETROIT FREE PRESS
STEAK AU POIVRE ON Crostini

recipe)

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. In a medium oven-proof skillet, heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil over high heat. Rub the tenderloin with the remaining 1/2 tablespoon of olive oil and season generously with salt and pepper. Add the beef to the pan and sear on all sides until brown, about 2 minutes per side. Place in the oven and roast until medium-rare, 7 to 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and transfer the beef to a baking sheet to rest. Cover with foil.

Meanwhile, reheat the skillet over high heat for 30 seconds. Remove the skillet from the heat, add the cognac, return to the heat, and ignite. Stand back, and as the flame dies, stir with a wooden spoon to loosen any particles in the bottom of the pan. After the cognac is reduced to 1 tablespoon, add the beef broth, simmering until reduced to 1/2 cup, about 12 to 15 minutes. Stir in the heavy whipping cream; set aside.

Using a very sharp knife, slice the tenderloin as thin as possible into 24 pieces. Place one slice on a crostini and top each with the warm sauce.

Makes 24 appetizers.

From "Martha Stewart's Hors D'Oeuvres Handbook" (Clarkson Potter, \$35)

UNO MAS QUESADILLAS

Salsa:

3/4 cup seeded and finely

chopped plum tomatoes

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1/3 cup cooked black beans, rinsed and drained

1/4 cup favorite picante sauce

1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley

1 tablespoon finely chopped red onion

2 teaspoons lime juice

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1/2 teaspoon minced fresh garlic

Quesadillas:

8 flour tortillas (6 inches in diameter), divided

1/4 to 3/4 cup shredded pepper jack cheese

1/4 cup thinly sliced green onions

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

3 tablespoons vegetable oil



J. KYLE KEENER/DETROIT FREE PRESS
UNO MAS QUESADILLAS

In a strainer set over a bowl, place the tomatoes and sprinkle with the kosher salt; let sit. In a medium bowl, mix together the black beans, picante sauce, parsley, red onion, lime juice, oregano and garlic. Add the tomatoes and stir until incorporated. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Place four tortillas on a work surface. Sprinkle each with about 2 tablespoons of cheese or more as desired. Top each with 1 tablespoon of the green onion slices. Season with black pepper. Cover each with the remaining tortillas and press down gently.

See APPETIZERS, Page 2

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Appetizers

FROM PAGE 1

In a large skillet heat the vegetable oil over medium heat. When hot, add the quesadillas to the skillet and cook until crispy golden brown, about 2 minutes on each side. Remove and transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain and cool slightly. Cut each into 8 wedges. Top the wedges with the salsa or serve it on the side.

Makes 32 wedges.
Adapted from "Cocktail Food" by Mary Corpening Barber and Sara Corpening Whiteford (Chronicle Books, \$16.95)

HERBED CHEESE SPREAD
8 ounces low-fat cream cheese, room temperature

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
3 tablespoons dry white wine
3/4 cup chilled heavy cream
2 shallots, finely chopped
6 fresh flat-leaf parsley sprigs, leaves only, finely chopped
6 fresh dill sprigs, finely chopped
10 fresh chive stalks, finely chopped
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

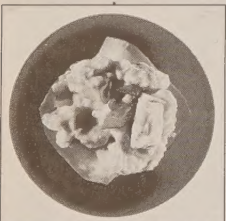
In a medium bowl, place the cream cheese and mash using a fork. Add the oil, vinegar and wine, mixing until well combined and creamy.

In a small bowl, whip the cream until stiff peaks form. Fold into the cheese mixture. Mix in the shallots, parsley, dill, chives and salt and pepper.

Transfer to a serving bowl and chill thoroughly before serving. The spread can be stored in a covered container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

Makes 2 cups.
From "Dips, Salsa & Spreads" by Judith Dunham and Jane Horn (Collins Publishers)

WONTON WONDERERS
12 wonton wrappers (3-by-3 1/2 inches), cut into quarters
Vegetable oil to brush on wontons, about 2 tablespoons
6 cups water
2 tablespoons kosher salt, divided
1 pound (about 3 medium) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, washed, patted dry
1/4 cup Major Grey's chutney
1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons plain yogurt
3 tablespoons crunchy peanut butter
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
1 1/2 teaspoons green curry paste
1/4 cup chopped green onions for garnish



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WONTON WONDERERS
Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Place the wonton wrappers on a work surface and brush lightly with the oil. Mold the wontons, oiled-side up, into the bottoms of

miniature (1-inch) muffin tins. Bake until light brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from oven, let cool slightly and remove from the muffin tins. Cool on a wire rack. Place on a baking sheet and cover tightly with plastic wrap until ready to assemble.

In a medium saucepan, heat the water and 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt over medium heat. Just before the water comes to a boil, add the chicken and simmer until cooked through, about 12 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a paper towel-lined plate and pat dry. Cool the chicken slightly, then finely chop and season with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt. In a medium bowl mix together the chutney, yogurt, peanut butter, lime juice and curry paste. Add the chicken and mix well. Refrigerate until slightly chilled.

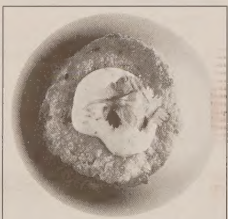
To assemble: Place 1 heaping teaspoon of the chicken mixture in each wonton cup and garnish with green onions. Serve at room temperature.

Makes 48 appetizers.
Cook's note: The wonton cups can be baked up to 3 days in advance and stored in an airtight container. The chicken mixture can be made up to 1 day in advance. Let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. The wonton cups can be filled up to 1 hour in advance.

From "Cocktail Food" by Mary Corpening Barber and Sara Corpening Whiteford (Chronicle Books, \$16.95)

GINGERED CHICKEN CAKES WITH CILANTRO-LIME MAYONNAISE

Shortening for baking sheet
Cakes:
2 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, about 3/4 pound
2 tablespoons fish sauce
1-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled, coarsely chopped
3 green onions, washed, ends removed, coarsely chopped
1 large garlic clove, peeled, crushed
Salt to taste
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon hot red pepper sauce or to taste
Topping:
4 tablespoons mayonnaise, low-fat or regular
1/2 cup cilantro, finely chopped
Juice of 1 lime
2 tablespoons diced mango, optional



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GINGERED CHICKEN CAKES with Cilantro-Lime Mayonnaise
Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Using shortening lightly grease one large or two small baking sheets; set aside.

To prepare the cakes: In a food processor fitted with the steel blade, place all the cake ingredients and pulse until finely chopped. Divide the mixture into 20 walnut-size pieces. With wet hands, shape each piece into a ball and flatten into a cake. Place the cakes on the prepared baking sheet. Place in

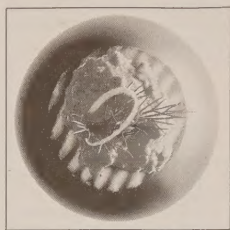
the oven and cook until golden on each side and cooked through. Remove and set aside to cool to warm or room temperature.

Meanwhile, make the topping. In a small bowl combine the mayonnaise, cilantro and lime juice. Spoon a small dollop on each cake and, if desired, garnish each cake with the diced mango.

Makes 20 cakes.
From "Hors D'Oeuvres" by Eric Treuille and Victoria Blashford-Snell (DK Publishing, \$19.95)

SMOKED SALMON MOUSSE
14 ounces smoked salmon, divided

1/2 cup plain, nonfat yogurt
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon paprika
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 lemon
1/4-inch-thick cucumber rounds (1 large cucumber) for serving



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SMOKED SALMON MOUSSE
Roughly chop half of the smoked salmon and place it in the work bowl of a food processor fitted with the steel blade. Add the yogurt, cayenne, paprika and olive oil. Grate the zest of the lemon into the processor bowl, then halve the lemon and squeeze it to measure 2 tablespoons of juice. Add the juice to the bowl and process the ingredients for as long as necessary to form a thin puree.

Transfer to a bowl. Chop the remaining salmon and fold in. Place a dollop of the mousse on a cucumber round for serving. **Makes about 2 cups.**

Adapted from "Hors D'Oeuvres & Appetizers" from Williams-Sonoma Kitchen Library (Time-Life Books, \$14.95)

LEMON CHILI SHRIMP STICKS

2 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed
1/2-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled, grated
2 tablespoons finely chopped cilantro
1/2 teaspoon Chinese hot chili sauce
1 tablespoon light soy sauce
1 tablespoon honey
3 tablespoons lemon juice
20 raw medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
20 wooden skewers (6 inches long), soaked in water for at least 30 minutes

In a large, non-metallic bowl, combine the garlic, ginger, cilantro, chili sauce, soy sauce, honey and lemon juice. Add the shrimp and toss in the marinade to coat each one well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. Thread 1 or 2 shrimps on each skewer.

Preheat the broiler. Place the shrimp on the broiler pan and broil until they turn pink and are opaque, about 3 minutes on each side. Serve hot, warm or at room temperature.

Makes 20 shrimp.
Cook's note: Marinate the

shrimp up to 4 hours in advance. Store in an airtight container. Skewer shrimp up to 1 hour in advance, storing in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

From "Hors D'Oeuvres" by Eric Treuille and Victoria Blashford-Snell (DK Publishing, \$19.95)

SHRIMP TAPAS
1 pound (about 32) uncooked medium shrimp
6 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 heaping tablespoons chopped canned chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
Salt for sprinkling
Peel and devein the shrimp, leaving the tails intact; set aside. In a large nonstick skillet, melt the butter over medium heat; do not let brown. Add the chipotle peppers and shrimp. Increase the heat to high.

Stirring constantly, cook the shrimp until just firm, about 5 minutes. Do not overcook. Sprinkle with salt and toss.

Put the shrimp and sauce on 8 small plates or one large platter and serve with wooden picks.

Makes about 32 pieces of shrimp.
From "Entertaining 1-2-3" by Rozanne Gold (Little, Brown and Company, \$27.95)

RICOTTA, WALNUT AND CHIVE BUNDLES

3/4 cup ricotta cheese, low-fat or regular
1/3 cup walnut halves
2 ounces Emmentaler or Swiss cheese, shredded
Grated rind of 1 lemon
Pinch of nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
6 sheets phyllo dough
1 tablespoon peanut or vegetable oil



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RICOTTA, WALNUT AND CHIVE bundles

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. In a food processor fitted with the steel blade place the ricotta, walnuts and cheese. Pulse to finely chop and combine the ingredients. Add the lemon zest, nutmeg, cinnamon, chives and salt and pepper to taste. Mix well.

Cut the phyllo sheets in half crosswise. Place one half sheet on a work surface, keeping the remaining sheets covered with a clean, damp towel so they do not dry out. On half of the sheet, spread one-twelfth of the cheese mixture in a rectangle about 3 inches long and 3/4-inch wide, leaving the bottom edge and side uncovered. Fold the bottom edge over the mixture, then fold in the sides and roll up into a cylinder about 1 1/2-inches in diameter. Repeat with the remaining sheets and cheese mixture. Alternatively, roll the phyllo around the cheese mixture to desired shape, such as triangles or small bundles.

Lightly oil a baking sheet using a small amount of peanut oil. Place the rolls on the baking sheet at least 1/2-inch apart. Lightly brush the rolls with the remaining oil.

Bake until golden and crisp, about 15 minutes. Serve hot or warm.

Makes 12 rolls.
Adapted from "Hors D'Oeuvres & Appetizers" from Williams-Sonoma Kitchen Library (Time-Life Books, \$14.95)

MOLASSES-GLAZED COCKTAIL RIBS
2 pounds baby-back or spare ribs

1/4 cup cider vinegar
2 tablespoons unsulphured molasses
2/3 cup maple syrup
1/2 cup Dijon mustard
1/4 cup harissa (see note)
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Cut the spare ribs in half lengthwise (it's best to have a meat cutter do this); then into individual ribs. Set aside.

In a large bowl combine the vinegar, molasses, maple syrup, mustard and harissa. Add the ribs, cover and allow them to marinate for 1 hour in the refrigerator.

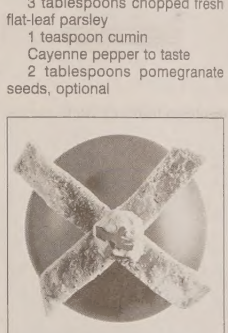
Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Transfer the ribs from the marinade to large baking sheets with at least a 1-inch rim; reserve the marinade. Season the ribs with kosher salt and pepper to taste. Cook the ribs, basting twice during the first half hour with the remaining marinade, turning the ribs over after a half-hour. The ribs should cook for a total of about 45 minutes, until glazed and cooked through. Do not baste during the last 10 minutes of cooking. Discard any remaining marinade.

Makes about 3 dozen.
Cook's note: Harissa is Middle Eastern hot sauce usually made with hot chilies, garlic, cumin, coriander, caraway and olive oil. Look for it in the ethnic section of some grocery stores and specialty stores. Substitute your favorite hot chile sauce.

Adapted from "Martha Stewart's Hors D'Oeuvres Handbook" (Clarkson Potter, \$35)

SESAME-EGGPLANT PUREE

2 medium eggplants
2 large cloves garlic, peeled, finely minced
1/4 cup tahini
1/3 to 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice or to taste
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
3 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 teaspoon cumin
Cayenne pepper to taste
2 tablespoons pomegranate seeds, optional



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SESAME EGGPLANT PUREE

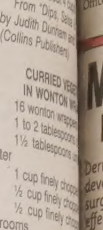
served on Herbed Pita Sticks
Preheat the broiler. Place the eggplants on a baking sheet and

poke a few holes in the skin under the broiler. Turn the eggplants over and broil until the skin is quite tender, about 15 minutes. Remove the eggplants and let cool.

When eggplants are cool, peel the skin into a medium food processor. Add the garlic, tahini, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Process until smooth. Add the pine nuts, parsley, cumin, cayenne and pomegranate seeds. The puree is best served in advance in an airtight container. Serve on bread rounds or bread rounds.

From "Dips, Salsa & Spreads" by Judith Dunham and Jane Horn (Collins Publishers)

CURRIED VEGETABLES IN WONTON WRAPPERS
16 wonton wrappers
1 to 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 1/2 tablespoons curry powder
1 cup finely chopped carrots
1 cup finely chopped onions
2 shallots, peeled and chopped
2 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
Salt to taste
2 tablespoons curry paste
3 tablespoons water
8 ounces green peas, shelled, finely chopped
Grated rind of 1 lemon
Additional snipped fresh chives for garnish



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CURRIED VEGETABLES in Wonton Wrappers
Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Place the wonton wrappers on a baking sheet and brush lightly with the oil. Bake about 8 minutes until golden. Remove and let cool. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, melt the butter. Add the carrots, onions, shallots and chives. Cook, stirring until the vegetables are golden, about 3 minutes. Add the curry paste, salt to taste and the peas. Cook, stirring until the water to the peas has evaporated. Cover and heat, stirring often, about 10 minutes. Stir the lemon rind into the mixture after it is cooked. Evenly divide the mixture among the wonton wrappers and garnish with chives.

Makes 16.
Adapted from "Hors D'Oeuvres & Appetizers" from Williams-Sonoma Kitchen Library (Time-Life Books, \$14.95)

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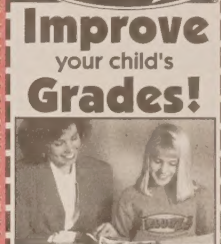
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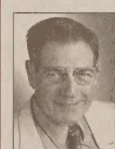
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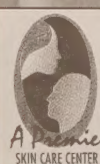
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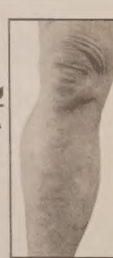
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This year, get crafty and avoid those pesky credit-card bills next month

BY BEVERLY BUNDY
KNIGHT RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

Economic reports are signaling that Santa isn't the only one with a workshop this holiday season. More of us are making our gifts and decorations, saving our credit cards and our sanity as we avoid the stores.

Craft and shelter stores are reaping the gains of the season as folks stay home to create and get to know their families a little better. We think those are both very good things.

The lunch mate

We all have one. The office spouse.

Sometimes it's a person of the same sex, sometimes not. Sometimes it's an out-of-office friendship, too, often not. But, it's the relationship that's always there for you during the work week.

He brings you a soda when you're under a crushing deadline. You run her paycheck over to the bank when you see her meeting has run late. She walks around the block with you after that blowup with the boss.

For this important person, too often unsung in our slog through corporate America, we present the lunch mate.

We took a prefabricated corrugated-paper container and filled it with all those office essentials that your employer fails to provide.

Wet wipes for the early morning post-doughnut cleanup; a roll of quarters for the office vending machine; a box of stain-remover sheets for that lunchtime ketchup accident; a candy bar for the 3 p.m. slumps; and an IOU for a martini the size of Dallas at the watering hole nearest the office.

Your office spouse knows you care. But, as with the one at home, it's nice to be acknowledged.

Little treasures

In a former generation, she would have been the family's maiden aunt. The sister who never married but knew how to sew and cooked like a dream. She worked, and on the weekends she was there for her parents so the other (now grown) children could go on with their lives.

Your friend isn't quite that pitiful, but she could get more zest out of life.

She loves to cook but would never dream of splurging on that out of lamb she read about in "Food and Wine." An extravagant big-time restaurant? Oh, not this month, well, in fact, not this year. Champagne

for New Year's? — oh, no, sparkling wine will be just fine.

Snatch off those glasses, Miss Jones, and let's try something different.

How about some saffron, expensive for sure, but isn't your myopic friend worth it? Or how about vanilla beans — and we mean good vanilla beans, not the ones that have been petrified in those silly test tubes under the glaring lights of the supermarket for lord knows how long.

Buy treats like these at stores that have turnover — spice stores or grocers that sell spices in bulk. Make sure they've been stored appropriately — away from glaring lights and sun, and in an airtight environment.

And wrap it up unexpectedly. Miss Jones should have some glitz left over after the party.

We painted one of those ubiquitous mint tins and paved it with rhinestones — some might say it's tacky; we say, hey, girls just want to have fun. To be a bit more decorous, paint a papier-mâché box and then trace a design with a gold paint pen.

Fruit favors

We forget in these days of all food, all the time, that there are some produce items that have a natural season. And several of them fall ripe from the trees right about now.

Persimmons, Ruby Red grapefruit and pomegranates are glorious with their tawny to garnet skins rosy up the cold days of winter. Their rich colors recall the Renaissance, without the cold marble floors and the drafts.

But, because their season is so short, we aren't terribly familiar with how to use these luscious jewels, aside from cutting open one of those Texas treasures to eat on the half shell for breakfast.

So, gather up an armful of fruit at the supermarket and pop it into just about any old container — the fruit's so gorgeous, who's going to notice if it's wearing tennis shoes?

But take some time, do a little research and put together some recipe cards to package with your gift. The Internet is the easiest place to go — simply type the name of the fruit you're looking for in the address bar, and away you go. Print out recipes, print out photos or illustrations of the fruit and laminate them together with cold-stick sheets.

Run a ribbon through the whole shebang, and you've got yourself one thoughtful, artful gift.

No postage required

The older I get, the less I want to receive gifts. My house is full, my memory is fuzzier by the hour, and I no longer want to house an object that someone thinks I'd like to look upon every day.

Call me humbly, but every year I become more fond of gift certificates. In fact, I like them as gifts second only to stock certificates.

The most important people in our lives — the teachers, the caregivers — don't get thanked enough by most of us. We rush by in the morning, hustle back at dusk, murmuring quick thank-yous, and bolt out the door.

This village that helps us survive the week deserves more than another apple doodad, another fruitcake or, worse yet, the always good for a third-grade crackup, eau de toilet.

I like gift certificates, and I hope these folks do, too, because they'll be getting them until my child is in graduate school.

So what kind of gift certificate do you give an important person in your life whom you don't know well?

Grocery-store certificates are great. Everyone eats, after all. But there's more to be had at grocery stores these days. They can use it for crafts supplies for the class or juice boxes for field day, if they're so inclined. They can treat themselves to a bouquet of flowers — the kind they like. And if it's one of those days, they can use it for a bottle of wine.

Coffee shops are another good bet. They can get the motor running first thing in the morning and they're a great place to wind down afterward.

Doughnut shops. Who doesn't like doughnuts? She can share with the class, or she can treat the teachers' lounge, or, if it's one of those days, she can eat six in the parking lot all by her own self.

So, you've got the gift. Take that \$5-birthday-card onus off of it by making the envelope personal.

If you're computer enabled, go to desktoppub.about.com/libr/weekly/envelope.pdf and print out the envelope template that you find there. Print it on card stock if you have it. (If you don't have it, you can buy sheets individually for pennies at print shops and office-supply stores.)

Once you've printed the envelope pattern on the paper, decide what you want to print on the envelope.

For example, we printed a

child's picture over and over on an envelope for his teacher.

Or, download pictures of TV shows and films like "Welcome Back, Kotter," "Our Miss Brooks" and "Ferris Bueller's Day Off." If your teacher is made of sterner stuff, you could use "Goodbye Mr. Chips" and "Dead Poet's Society."

Use the same concept for the neighbor who retrieves your newspaper when it rains early in the morning, snubbing photos from sitcoms that feature neighbors like "My Favorite Martian," "I Love Lucy" and "The Bob Newhart Show."

For the piano teacher, download some sheet music or pictures of Beethoven or one of those other German guys.

Lay the photos on the back side of the sheet with template printed on it, print them out, and you're almost done. Cut around the template, glue the envelope together where the instructions say, and you're done.

You can also do this the old-fashioned way by using pretty sheets from magazines. Carefully dismember an envelope and use it as your pattern to trace on the sheet. Cut the sheet, fold and glue.

Function follows form

Sometimes, function follows form.

We were so taken by the brocade in the fabric stores this season that we had to find a use for it. We vetoed re-covering the living-room sofa. Mah-jongg pajamas seemed a little frivolous. Pillows would be too slickery — as in slippery.

So we covered a box. Because the fabric has two usable sides, we used one for the bottom of the box, the other for the top, attaching it all with that fabulous two-sided peel-and-stick tape.

And then, to fill it, we went with a good old Hershey's favorite that has been around at least 35 years — peanut blossoms. The flavors have nothing to do with the mysteries of the East, but we love the little turban shapes the Kisses make in the soft, slightly chewy dough. Sort of an Asian theme happening here.

Just think of it as a living-room sofa saved.

PEANUT BLOSSOMS

8 ounces milk chocolate candy kisses
1/2 cup solid shortening
3/4 cup creamy peanut butter
1/3 cup white sugar
1/3 cup packed light brown sugar

1 egg
2 tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup white sugar, for decoration

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Remove wrappers from chocolate pieces.

Beat shortening and peanut butter in large bowl until well blended. Add 1/3 cup granulated sugar and brown sugar; beat until light and fluffy. Add egg, milk and vanilla; beat well. Stir together flour, baking soda and salt; gradually beat into peanut butter mixture.

Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in granulated sugar; place on ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until lightly browned.

Immediately press a chocolate piece into the center of each cookie; cookie will crack around edges. Remove from cookie sheet to wire rack. Cool completely.

Yields 4 dozen
— Hershey's

Friends and good fortune

These fortune cookies (recipe below) are as much fun to give as they are to receive.

Because you make them yourself and tuck your own very personal fortune inside, you can be as naughty or as nice as you'd like.

Enlist a family member, because it takes some coordination to do the folding and twisting before the cookies become hard.

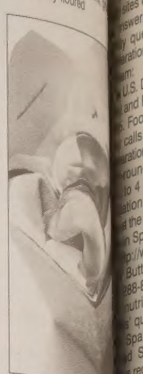
We disassembled a plastic, store-bought take-out container and used it as the pattern for our large box. Then we glued the paper to the plastic box shell and refolded the whole construction and glued it together, using brads dressed up with tassels for the handle.

You can buy box templates in the rubber-stamp section of craft stores, but you can also get them free from the Internet. Two good sites are www.mirkwooddesigns.com and www.bydonovan.com. Print the patterns on a piece of card stock and trace onto a piece of decorative paper. Cut the paper, glue to the card stock, and you're an origami master.

FORTUNE COOKIES

2/3 cup all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons ground ginger
3 large egg whites
1 cup powdered sugar, sifted
1 stick plus 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted

2-inch cookie cutter
3 to 4 cookie sheets
and lightly floured



RALPH LAUREN FOR WORKTOP
A GIFT BOX with personal fortune cookies is an easy food-craft gift.

Sift flour and ginger into bowl. Put egg whites into bowl and beat until frothy. Add powdered sugar and melted butter and beat until mixture is smooth paste, then set aside for 15-20 minutes.

Using a cookie cutter, cut the dough into 2-inch circles. Dip into flour, gently make about 2 inches in diameter cookie sheet. Working at a time, put a heaping 1/2 of mixture in the center of circle. Smooth with a flat edge each circle.

Bake in preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes. Edges start to brown. Remove from oven and carefully slide each cookie onto a flat surface. Put a message in the center of each cookie and fold in half, then fold the 2 corners of each other — the dough will still hold.

Continue baking until cookie as they are ready. You have lots of help! Work on only 1 sheet at a time. The cookies will dry out as they are folded.

Cool on wire rack. Completely dry. If packing to give as a gift, wrap in tissue first so they don't break.

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Matthew 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins

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Holiday cooks find help on phone hot lines and online

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Free telephone services and web sites offer a variety of special-ty assistance to cooking and holiday party questions during holiday season times. Here are some resources:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
• Food safety specialists answer questions about meat and poultry preparation and cooking questions, Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST. Recorded information is available 24 hours a day at the same number. Also available in Spanish. On the Net: <http://www.tsis.usda.gov>

Butterball Turkey Talk-Line:
800-837-2. Home economists answer holiday questions, in both English and Spanish, for callers in the United States and Canada. All callers receive a free calendar, with information through Dec. 21, weekdays, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST. Automated assistance is provided after hours. Hearing- and speech-impaired assistance 800-TDD-3848. On the Net: <http://www.butterball.com>

■ **Foster Farms Turkey Helpline:** 800-255-7227. Helpline is available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. PST, Monday through Friday. After-hours automated service is available. Free brochures and recipes are offered. On the Net: <http://www.fosterfarms.com>

■ **Land O'Lakes Holiday Bake-line:** 800-782-9606. Baking specialists are available for questions or suggestions through Dec. 24, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. CST, 7 days a week. Free recipe leaflet for all callers or Web site visitors. On the Net: <http://www.landolakes.com>

■ **Perdue consumer help line:** 800-473-7383. Consumer-relations representatives answer cooking, storage and other questions about poultry products weekdays year-round (except Christmas Day) 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST.

Free booklet offer with tips on safe handling of poultry. On the Net: <http://www.perdue.com>

■ **Dial-A-Chef Holiday Hotline:** 888-723-4468. Provided by Shady Brook Farms, a 24-hour, 7 days-a-week, automated culinary guidance and recipe service offered by famous chefs through Jan. 1. On the Net: <http://www.dialachef.com>

■ **Empire Kosher poultry customer hotline:** 800-367-4734. Help is offered by consumer-affairs representatives year-round Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST; Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST. Program offers recipes, newsletter, video, tips on defrosting and cooking poultry. Closed Jewish and secular holidays. On the Net: <http://www.empirekosher.com>

■ **Ocean Spray consumer help line:** 800-662-3263. Year-round, weekdays (but not Christmas Day, New Year's Day and other major holidays) 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST. Consumer department staff field questions on cranberries, offer recipes, cooking tips, nutritional information, menu-planning worksheets, product information. On the Net: <http://www.oceanspray.com>

■ **Reynolds Turkey Tips Line:** 800-745-4000. A year-round 24-hour automated hot line; through Dec. 31, offers advice on turkey defrosting, preparation and cooking options, plus free brochure and recipes.

Year-round Web site:
<http://www.reynoldskitchens.com>

■ **Cook's Illustrated magazine's** site features detailed guidance and recipes, for preparing turkey and all the trimmings, plus dessert, with bright step-by-step visuals: <http://www.turkeyhelp.com>

■ **The National Turkey Federation** Web site has recipes and cooking tips among its year-round general information: <http://www.eatturkey.com>

■ **Includes a holiday entertaining guide:** <http://www.mccormick.com>

■ **Offers holiday recipes, with tips from professional chefs and cookbook writers, from turkey through desserts:** <http://www.starbchefs.com>

■ **Offers recipes, information and hints:** <http://www.southernfood.about.com>

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Tip for throwing no-worry holiday parties: Plan

BY LINDA GIUCA
THE HARTFORD COURANT

There are some tips for holiday entertaining. The key to stress-free entertaining (well, almost) is planning. Once you've decided that, yes, you'll be a host this holiday season, it's time to make some key decisions. What kind of party? What time of day? How many guests? For your party to the number of guests, says Ken Jurgensen, owner of Chives catering company in Conn., "and don't have 100 people if your house can only comfortably hold 20."

Determine the menu and beverages. Gather recipes you plan to use, or make a list of the pre-made/desserts you wish to use and where. If you've decided to bring food or drink, if they've offered — make a list of their names and what they'll bring. Decide what drinks to serve. Wine and beer go well with food and are easy self-serve options. Cocktails, particularly martinis, are stylish again but offer a select few. Make lists for everything — food, decorations and even the linens, platters, serving pieces and dishes you plan to use. List-making "compartmentalizes everything and then (the advance work) becomes a series of small jobs that seem much less overwhelming," says Leslie Brenner, a contributor to the wineanswers.com Web site and author of "The Art of the Cocktail Party" (Plume, \$13.95).

About three weeks before the party, send out invitations, or begin making calls to invite guests. This is holiday time, so the earlier you get the word out, the better.

For an open house, decide which rooms will be open to guests. With its aromas and activity, the kitchen is a natural draw in any home. To prevent everyone from congregating in one spot, devote other rooms and corners of rooms to food and drink.

Choose a spot convenient to the kitchen — or in the kitchen, if the room is large enough — for the bar. The area should be close enough to the kitchen to easily replenish ice or glasses but not close enough to create a bottleneck.

If the house is already decorated for the holidays, additional decorations for the party may not be necessary. Candles, particularly aromatic ones, and a few strategically placed vases of flowers add a festive touch without breaking the bank.

Hire some neighborhood teenagers to work the party. They can pass hors d'oeuvres, whisk away dirty glasses, take out the garbage, refill the ice bucket and tackle the chores that pop up during the party.

About a week ahead, especially the weekend before the party, hit the grocery store armed with a list, and buy nonperishables and foods that will keep well in the refrigerator or freezer. With the bulk of the shopping done, popping into the store a few days ahead for the perishables won't require much time.

A week or two ahead, make any recipes that can be frozen. A few days ahead, begin working on recipes — or parts of recipes — that can be made ahead and refrigerated.

The day before the party, assemble serving platters and dishes. Collect the tablecloth, napkins and any other linens you plan to use. Begin setting up the buffet table and the bar area.

If you've ordered food from a shop or caterer, arrange to pick up the items. Make sure to inquire about refrigeration, reheating and serving requirements.

The day of the party, wake up early and do something stress-reducing for yourself — take a long walk or a soak in the tub.

Consult those to-do lists, turn on the oven, enlist the family's help and get the food ready.

Enjoy.

Not sure what to cook up this weekend? Turn to Hills Newspapers Shopping Plus for a recipe idea

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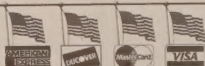
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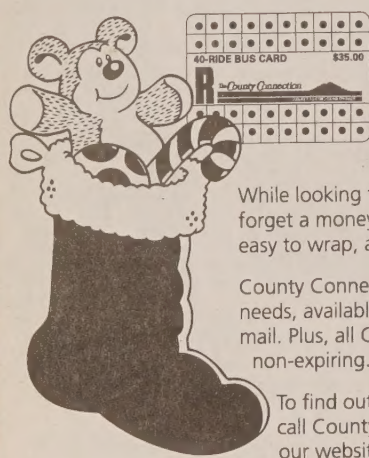


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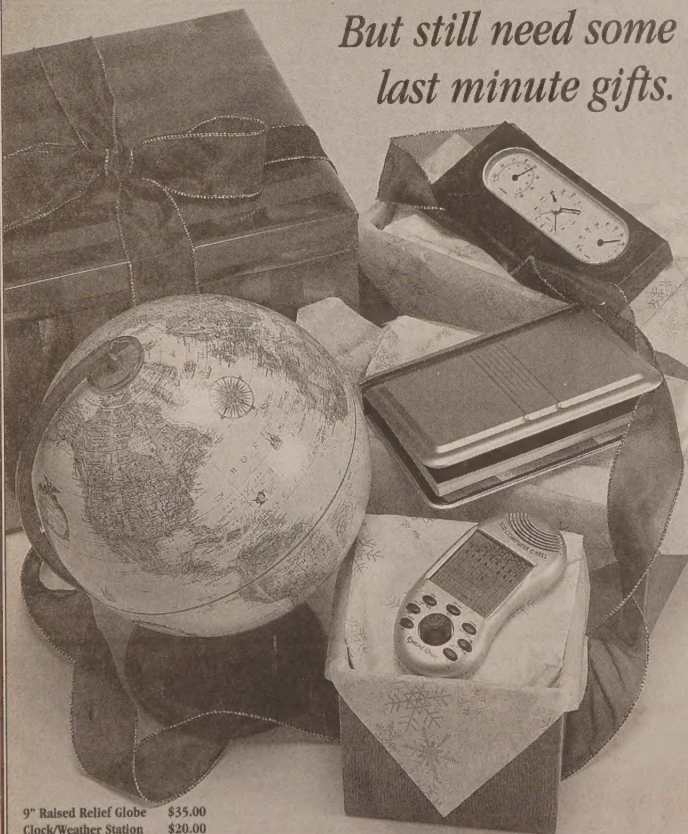
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THE JOURNAL

December 21, 2001
LIBRARY USE ONLY

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Martin Snapp Albany school kids brighten Solano Avenue for holidays [A7]

Inside Recommended children's books for holiday giving [A12]

Free, low-cost bus pass plan approved

AC Transit may offer reduced-cost rides to low-income families after 2-year project

By John Simerman
STAFF WRITER

Thousands of students from low-income families will ride AC

Transit buses for free, while others will get cut-rate student passes under a pilot program hashed out this week by regional transportation officials.

Officials said they hope to start offering free and reduced-price bus passes in September.

The two-year pilot program was approved Wednesday by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, ending weeks of

wrangling between the regional planning body and AC Transit.

The two agencies sparred over who should pay for a plan that supporters hope will reduce school absences, particularly at the end of the month when poor families often run low on cash.

The \$2 million total from MTC is less than the \$12 million that state Assemblywoman Dion Aroner, D-Berkeley, one of the

bus pass program's main proponents, was asking for.

Contra Costa Supervisor John Gioia said that despite the fact that the plan is not as far-reaching as the one he and the supporters had initially supported, the bus pass pilot program could make a big difference for the students, more than 100 of whom lobbied the commission for bus passes at a committee meeting

last week.

Under the plan, AC Transit is responsible for coming up with a \$1 million yearly match, which it can pay for from its own money, or with the aid of county transportation funds, such as those from Measure B and Measure C.

MTC officials last week suggested a more modest pilot project for a portion of the AC Trans-

sit district, which runs from Richmond to Fremont. Under the new deal, all 100,000 middle- and high school students within the district can participate.

Those who qualify for federal school lunch subsidies — as many as 30,000 students — can get free bus passes. The rest will pay \$15 per month, compared

See BUS, Page A10

DEVELOPMENTS TAKING SHAPE AT EL CERRITO PLAZA

Portion of creek flows into city ownership

The dedication of a portion of Cerrito Creek by plaza owners puts long-planned restoration efforts in motion

By J.R. Deaton
STAFF WRITER

EL CERRITO — Hopes that a meandering, stable and healthy Cerrito Creek will complement revitalized El Cerrito Plaza received a big boost this week when the City Council unanimously accepted ownership of the creek and land on each side. The council also unanimously accepted a \$350,000 grant from the California Coastal Conservancy to help restore the creek and go-ahead for the city manager to contract for creek design and stabilization.

Wolfe Mason Associates, a Berkeley-based landscape architecture firm, developed preliminary design plans for Cerrito Creek restoration for the city in 1997. The creek runs along the south side of the Plaza and marks the city-El Cerrito border. The city has proposed to develop the creek and construction drawings for Cerrito Creek for a fee of \$61,760.

Given the extensive experience that Wolfe Mason Associates has in creek restoration projects throughout the East Bay, the knowledge of this particular project, they are the most qualified firm for this work," community development director Jill Keimach said in a report to the council.

In a letter to the city last month, Sarah Tamblin, senior associate of Wolfe Mason Associates, said the \$350,000 should be enough to design and "install basic renovation" of Cerrito Creek. Friends of Five Creeks, a local creek advocacy group, has pledged to contribute up to \$10,000 and volunteer labor to the project.

Plaza co-owner Regency Centers offered the dedication of land to the city for creek restoration as part of the shopping center's reconstruction. Creek restoration advocates hope a restored Cerrito Creek will someday be part of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project, linked to the Alameda Greenway. The second phase of the creek restoration



STEVE MASLANKA/STAFF

AT THE EL CERRITO Farmer's Market last Saturday Amanprith Randhawa, at right, with her sister Bhavkaran, grabs a slice of orange from a fruit stand. The market is open Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

New investors buy Plaza restaurant site

By Chris Treadway
STAFF WRITER

EL CERRITO — As the renovated Plaza shopping center takes shape, it is also taking on an additional owner. Two investors have purchased a choice portion of the property fronting San Pablo Avenue where a high-profile restaurant is slated to open in May.

Investors Albert and Judith Lamperti are the newest partial owners of the Plaza, buying the pad designated for a 6,500-square-foot Macaroni Grill at the shopping center's southeast corner for \$1.575 million.

Multiple ownership at the Plaza has been an issue in the past. The property was divided between Longs Drugs and former owners Emporium-Capwell and the Bilak Co., and disagreements among the three stymied

efforts to renovate the 341,140-square-foot shopping center. The center now has four owners in the mix, with the new investors joining Albertson's, Longs Drugs and majority owner Regency Centers.

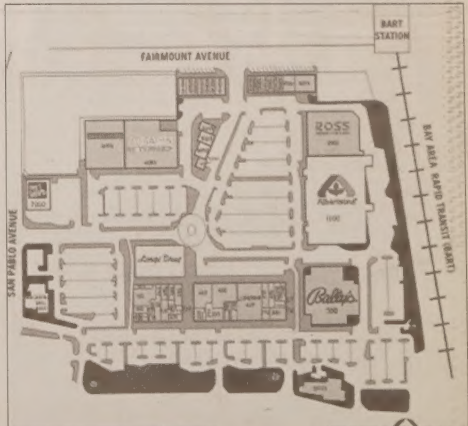
Despite past travails at the Plaza, Regency Vice President Tom Engberg said the purchase is "not unusual" at a shopping center. "We're aware of the issues that come from multiple ownership of a property," he said. Deeded restrictions allow Regency to "retain control over what happens with the building," he said. "To the public it's seamless."

The addition of a new owner provides new capital for Regency, which has seen costs of Plaza construction exceed expectations. The firm has also extended its finances with the purchase of

another plaza on the Interstate 80 corridor, the Powell Street Plaza in Emeryville.

Engberg said the rising cost of construction in the Bay Area and unanticipated obstacles typical of any major project put the tab for Plaza construction beyond the firm's expectations, but that it had been offset by better-than-expected rents at the center.

The center is about 90 percent leased, he said, and talks are continuing with prospective tenants. The opening this month of the new Albertson's was preceded by the opening of a 9,267-square-foot Pier One Imports home decor store. Next to open will be the row of smaller shops fronting Fairmount Avenue next to the Ross Store, then the line of shops next to Bed Bath & Beyond.



COURTESY REGENCY CENTERS

THE PLAZA site map shows the restaurant site purchased by investors (lower left), and the vacated Albertson's building that may be used for a Bally's Fitness Center or another retail use.

See PLAZA, Page A9

Albany school board recall effort fizzles out as deadline passes

By Matt Petersen
STAFF WRITER

ALBANY — An effort to recall two school district board members has apparently failed, ac-

cording to the Alameda County Registrar's Office.

A group of activists led by Albany elementary school parent John Kendall missed the 5 p.m.

Dec. 12 deadline to file the signatures of 25 percent of the approximately 9,000 voters required to put the recall of former board president Marsha Skinner and

board member Bill Cain on the ballot.

Another petition seems unlikely since Skinner's term expires next year. Cain's term runs

through 2004.

In the middle of a heated teachers contract dispute in June,

See RECALL, Page A9

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WORTH CHECKING OUT

'A Celtic Peace'

Celebrate the Winter Solstice and the Christmas season with "A Celtic Peace," an evening of Irish music and dance with Todd Denman and friends at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 23, at the Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave. in Berkeley. This fun, warm-hearted musical program is dedicated to world peace and appropriate for the entire family. Tickets: \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, available at the door. Details: www.juliamorgan.org or call 510-845-8542.

'Year End Kiss Off'

The Julia Morgan Center for the Arts,

2640 College Ave., hosts "Big Fat Year End Kiss Off" — An evening of standup political comedy and improvisational sketches encapsulating the events of the year 2001 at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 26. The ninth annual show will feature the talents of Will Durst, Johnny Steele, Debi Durst, Michael Bassier, Steven Kravitz and other players. All tickets are \$17. Tickets: 925-798-1300. For details on the event call 510-845-8542 or check online at www.juliamorgan.org.

Interactive nativity

Children and adults are invited to be part of the do-it-yourself Christmas

Tableaux at 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 23, at St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Ave. in Berkeley. Following a 10 a.m. worship service, Be part of the Christmas story by dressing as angels, shepherds, wise persons, Mary and Joseph. Newborns and dolls take turns playing the baby in the manger. Costumes and cameras will be provided. For more information, call 845-8830.

Events at Tilden

The East Bay Regional Park District, in its 67th year, has several events

See WORTH, Page A9

ALBANY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Kids help decorate on Solano, San Pablo

By James Carter
CHAMBER MANAGER

Children are getting restless. You can see it in their eyes. Whether their families celebrate Hanukkah, Ramadan, Christmas, Kwanzaa, or the winter solstice, this is their time. And it should be ...

This year, the Chamber and other members of the community asked children from Marin Elementary School to help us decorate Solano and San Pablo avenues. Kids ages 6 to 11 created marvelous posters of snowmen and snowflakes and penguins romping about on a winter's day, all of them on view in the windows of shops in Albany. (See Martin Snapp's column today for more details.)

The priceless artwork of these children adds yet another touch to our avenues, already glistening with holiday lights and alive with the spirit of the season.

THIS IS ALSO a time for young couples. You can see them bundled up, holding each other tight as they stroll up and down the street, pausing to buy gifts from wonderful shops like Bears & Baubles, an enchanting place stuffed with toy animals — reindeer and geese, puppy dogs and monkeys, lions and tigers and bears.

There are many beautiful boutiques and wonderful mom-and-pop shops in town, like Play It Again Toys, which carries playthings that are as good-as-new for a fraction of the cost. And just up the Avenue is Teddies Party, the perfect place to get wrapping paper and bows, greeting cards and gifts, and all the things you need for your holiday celebration.

In between shopping, folks young and old can duck into one of a dozen cafes and restaurants in Albany where they can sip hot chocolate, coffee and hot cider. There they warm each other's hands and talk glowingly about the future — even on a rainy day, café windows fogged with mist. On a sunny day, at Grace Baking,

folks can sit outdoors and enjoy their pastries, watch the parade of people, and sip a cappuccino or a latte.

The Royal Café on San Pablo, is another charming place, its '50s décor featuring quintessential photos of Marilyn Monroe. It is a time machine of sorts, its malt shop jukebox stuffed with classics, though the menu is from this era — jam-packed with savory omelets, waffles, and pancakes.

Then there is Monteros, a terrific Mexican restaurant on Solano open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. There families watch in awe as hot steaming platters of chimichangas, chile verde, and pollo mole — chicken drenched in a wonderful sauce made from chilies and chocolate — are served with a hot pad and a warm smile.

Folks from around the Bay Area come to town to enjoy the fine cuisine of our gourmet restaurants, such as Nizza La Bella. There they serve dishes like *moules Provencale feu de bois* — fire-roasted mussels — not to mention French onion soup, and a dry-aged ribeye steak that is superb.

Just a few doors down at Mangia Mangia, Soraya Ghaemi and other members of her family prepare extraordinary dishes from the north and south of Italy — items like Caesar salad made from scratch, and involtini di pollo — chicken breast stuffed with sweet peppers and mushrooms, bathed in a brandy cream sauce.

NEW YEAR'S EVE If you haven't made plans for New Year's Eve and want to start it out in style, The Solano Grill and Bar is the place to go. They are offering a New Year's special — an incredible five-course meal for \$45. This is California cuisine at its best. Reservations are still available.

ODDS-ON FAVORITE The odds are that you haven't purchased one of our raffle tickets yet. The drawing is Dec. 29, so get on over to the Chamber and grab a handful (1108

Solano Ave.). The prizes are great, the odds of winning high, and the price low. If, due to some unkind twist of fate, you fail to win a prize, your tickets should prove to be quite useful — they make wonderful bookmarks, are great for scribbling notes, and, in an emergency, can provide insulation for a hole in the sole of your shoes. So stock up and win, win, win! Tickets are \$1 each, six for \$5, 12 for \$10. For more information: 510-525-1771.

HOLIDAY PARTY: Our annual Holiday Party, sponsored by The Mechanics Bank, was a huge success, with well over 200 people attending despite a cold rain and scattered power outages. Thanks to bank manager Mike Stockdale, and Brenda Crenshaw Coggins, who made it all happen.

Also thanks to those who contributed food to our party: Jorge and Emma Sandoval from Walker's Pie Shop; Tom and Barbara Van Zile from Domino's Pizza; Jody and Betty Royston from Jodie's Restaurant; Issac Diaz and Safeway Stores, which contributed a mountain of meats and vegetables, salads and breads. Also thanks to John Tierney from Albany Bowl, Gayle Davis from Sisters, and Doug Miller, owner of Club Mallard, who donated wonderful door prizes. Doug also provided us with our gracious bartender that evening, the lovely Michelle Lee.

NEWEST MEMBER: Majid Ghanadan, owner of AM/PM Market, donated four cases of soda pop to our party. The proud father of three children, Majid is our newest member. If you don't know it already, AM/PM is the cheapest place in town to get gas. In addition, a friendly staff offers everything from cold beer and hot dogs to lottery tickets, ice cream to toothpaste, and, for those in need, Tums. And they do it 24-hours-a-day. Of course AM/PM also provides everything you need to operate a motor vehicle — except, of course, a driver.

POLICE REPORTS

Vandals smash Land Rover's window

By K. Osborn
CORRESPONDENT

ALBANY — On the afternoon of Dec. 10 a resident on the 800 block of Polk Street reported that vandals had smashed the window of his green Land Rover. There were no witnesses.

■ On the morning of Dec. 11 a resident on the 700 block of Taft Street reported that during the night thieves had broken into his car while it was parked in front of his home and stolen items from inside. There were no witnesses.

■ At about 1 p.m. on Dec. 13 an Oakland woman reported that her grandson had stolen her red '97 Chrysler van and that it was believed to be parked on the 900 block of Jackson Street and her grandson was believed to be at a residence on the 900 block of Madison Street. She wanted him arrested. Officers located the vehicle and the 15-year-old Oakland boy. He was arrested for grand theft auto, cited and released to his parent/guardian with a notice to appear.

■ On the evening of Dec. 13 a Point Richmond woman reported that she had put her purse under her seat while bowling at Albany Bowl and someone took it. No one saw the thief.

■ On the evening of Dec. 13 a resident on the 600 block of San Carlos Street reported that someone had tried to break into her blue '87 Toyota Camry parked in front of her home. There were no witnesses.

■ At about 2:15 a.m. on Dec. 16 officers stopped a blue '95 Mitsubishi pickup near Buchanan and Pierce streets for a vehicle code violation. The driver, a 42-year-old Albany woman, was found to be intoxicated and to have an outstanding Albany warrant for driving with a suspended license. She was arrested, cited and released with a notice to appear.

Place of business hit by gun-wielding robber

By J.R. Deaton
STAFF WRITER

EL CERRITO — At 6:50 p.m. Dec. 10 a man entered a business in the 11200 block of San Pablo Avenue, brandished a handgun and then took money from the cash register and a customer.

■ At 6:05 p.m. Dec. 6 two young women approached a woman from behind in the 2700 block of Del Monte Avenue and then stole her purse by hitting the victim in the face.

■ At 7:05 a.m. Dec. 4 in a Potrero Avenue residence, police arrested a 56-year-old man after he reportedly hit a 52-year-old woman several times in the head and mouth. The woman suffered injury to her mouth and teeth.

■ At 12:29 p.m. Dec. 4 a juvenile suspect was arrested at the

■ On the morning of Dec. 14 a resident on the 1000 block of Ventura Avenue reported that a scraggly-looking man had knocked on her door and tried to go into her back yard. Officers contacted the 36-year-old Healdsburg man and a check found he had outstanding Alameda County warrants for DUI and for being under the influence totaling \$14,000. He was arrested, cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ Shortly before 1 a.m. on Dec. 15 officers stopped a white Volkswagen that had its headlights off. The driver, a 25-year-old Oakland woman, was found to be intoxicated and failed the field sobriety test. She was arrested, cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ At about 1:30 a.m. on Dec. 15 officers stopped a brown '83 BMW on Buchanan Street for speeding. The driver, a 47-year-old Berkeley woman, was found to be intoxicated and failed the field sobriety test. She was arrested, cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ On the morning of Dec. 16 officers stopped a 1991 BMW for erratic driving. The driver, an 18-year-old woman, was found to be intoxicated and was arrested for DUI, cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ On the morning of Dec. 16 the principal at Marin Elementary School reported that between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. someone had painted graffiti around the school over the weekend. There were no witnesses.

■ During the week of Dec. 16 officers towed six vehicles, responded to eight false alarms, attended to eight lost or stolen animals, assisted four people who were locked out of their homes or cars and responded to three reports of barking dogs, three reports of domestic violence, nine civil disturbances, five cars and/or pedestrians, 54 citations and 66 warrants. Firefighter/paramedics responded to 14 medical emergencies.

■ At about 12:30 a.m. on Dec.

San Pablo Avenue Safeway store after store employees reportedly had caught her trying to steal several packages of candy.

■ At 10:30 a.m. Dec. 3 it was discovered that a student at Portola Middle School had brought a small amount of marijuana into the school.

■ At 12:51 p.m. Dec. 2 the California Check Cashing Stores Inc. in the 10300 block of San Pablo Avenue reported that a woman had earlier cashed a \$976 counterfeit check. The suspect is a 29-year-old Richmond woman.

■ At 2:41 p.m. Dec. 2, in the 5500 block of Central Avenue, someone entered an unlocked garage and tried to steal a toolbox. The suspect ran away when

16 officers stopped a black Toyota for a vehicle code violation. The driver, a 25-year-old woman, was found to be intoxicated and was arrested for DUI, cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ Shortly after midnight Dec. 16 a resident on the 1000 block of Portland Avenue reported that between 10 p.m. and the time of the report, someone had stolen his red '96 Volvo. There were no witnesses.

■ At about 2 a.m. on Dec. 16 officers stopped a 1991 pickup on San Pablo Avenue for speeding. The driver, a 25-year-old San Leandro woman, was found to be intoxicated and was arrested for DUI, cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ Shortly before 3 a.m. on Dec. 16 officers stopped a 1991 BMW for erratic driving. The driver, an 18-year-old woman, was found to be intoxicated and was arrested for DUI, cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ On the morning of Dec. 16 the principal at Marin Elementary School reported that between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. someone had painted graffiti around the school over the weekend. There were no witnesses.

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■ At 4:10 p.m. Dec. 2, a 900 block of Lexington it was reported that someone entered an apartment building construction site and stole worth of tools. There were no witnesses.

■ At 2:21 a.m. Dec. 2, a body broke into a 10700 block of Lexington, parked in the 11700 block of Pablo Avenue. The window was smashed and property inside stolen.

■ At 7:10 p.m. Nov. 28, the intersection of Stockton and Lexington avenues, a 56-year-old woman was arrested after police determined she was driving under the influence of alcohol.

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Afghans reveal a culture unseen by Americans

By Tom Lochner
STAFF WRITER

BERKELEY — The Afghanistan of Tania Farzana's childhood was a peaceful place where an Afghan was an Afghan, whether Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara or other.

The Afghanistan of Arlene Blum's young adulthood was a place of green fertile valleys and trees surrounded by icy mountains, where female mountain climbers from America and Europe met for sport.

To Kabir Howaida, it was a composer's delight, a crossroads of musical currents from Europe, South Asia and the Middle East.

To Shahi Sadat, it was a place of poetry, befitting the birthplace of the 13th-century Sufi mystic Rumi.

And to Zemyalai Tarzi, the former director of the Kabul Museum, it was an archaeologist's playground of ancient Greek, Zoroastrian, Chinese, Buddhist and Muslim art and architecture.

Farzana, Blum, Howaida, Sadat and Tarzi — the latter represented by his daughter, Nadia — were at Berkeley High School's Florence Schwimley Little Theater on Sunday to testify that there once was — and may one day soon re-emerge — an Afghanistan apart from guns and tyrannical mullahs.

"What does Afghanistan look like to Americans? All they see is war, refugees, men in long coats and women that are covered," said Tania Farzana's sister, Rega Farzana, who tutors Afghan children in Fremont.

"Afghanistan: a Cultural Journey" combined poetry, music, lectures, a fashion show and a crafts bazaar with a message of mourning for the recent war and hope for the future.

More than 300 people sat in silence in the auditorium as Sadat recited, "A young mother walks to her dead child, my little baby wake up, from his poem inspired by a news photograph of a mother cradling a baby bleeding from the head.

They were equally rapt when Tania Tarzi showed before-and-after slides of the fifth-century



HERMAN BUSTAMANTE, R.S.

This dress is typical of what an Afghan woman would wear at a celebration, said organizers of Sunday's event on Afghan culture.

great Buddha, a 175-foot-tall sculpture hewn out of a cliff face in Bamiyan province and dynamited by the Taliban earlier this year.

They gasped at the beauty of the slides, by Diane and Edwin Bernbaum in 1973 and Debra Denker in 1975, of terraced fields, busy markets, desert and mountain landscapes, and faces of everyday Afghans.

They clapped as Howaida on piano, accompanied by Marai Arefi on tabla, played danceable Afghan tunes, and Howaida concluded with an impassioned "God bless America and God bless her caring people."

CORRECTION

An editorial in last week's Journal stated that the El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency was re-activated by the City Council. The vote was made by council members in their other capacity as the agency board. It also stated that the action was taken two months ago. The vote actually took place at the first meeting in December.

Motoring scofflaws targeted by Albany Police

Life is becoming more difficult and costly for scofflaws who treat Marin Avenue and Buchanan Street in Albany as a racetrack while ignoring red lights.

In a recent traffic task force operation police issued two citations for speeding in a school zone on Marin Avenue and six for running the red light at Marin and San Pablo avenues, according to Lt. Greg Bone who heads the patrol division which includes traffic enforcement.

The citations were given between 7 and 11 a.m. Ten other motorists were cited for a total of 26 violations as follows: eight for failure to observe stop signs; one illegal U-turn; four registration violations; four for no proof of insurance; and one for failure to wear a seat belt.

Nine of the 18 cited were Albany residents. This is a blow to many proud Albanians who like to believe that most people driving Marin and Buchanan like the Daytona 500 are out-of-town commuters. The police have long been skeptical of this civic jingoism.

I asked Bone if people coming into the intersection on a yellow light were ticketed for running a red one. "This is not a borderline thing," he said. "The only motorists cited were those who entered the intersection after the light turned red. But when you see a yellow light it is an advisory that you are supposed to stop and not enter the intersection."

There was a time when the vast majority of drivers understood this. In recent years, however, people increasingly interpret the yellow light as a signal to speed up to get through the intersection before the light changes to red.

These drivers are therefore going faster than they were before they saw the yellow light, and the chances are they were speeding then. Consequently, accidents have become more numerous and more serious.

Several of the worst I have

seen were at the intersection of Ashbury and Fairmount avenues in El Cerrito. People tend to speed west on Fairmount and fail to see the light. (Some may be partially blinded by the sun in late afternoon.) Like all intersections, this one should be entered with extreme caution even if you have a green light.

Albany Police Chief Larry Murdo says his department has conducted eight Traffic Task Force operations targeting speeders, red light-runners, and pedestrian crosswalk violators. "We do at least two a month now," he said. "We generally have to bring in an officer on an overtime basis, and we have to have a second dispatcher. We select officers who have shown they are particularly good at this sort of thing."

One of these officers is Dave Lembi, who is being moved to the day shift next month to provide more traffic control on a regular basis. Lembi is one of the department's top-ranking ticketers of speeders and other automotive offenders. Like Officer John Geissberger, another ticket ace now on this shift, Lembi's primary concern will be traffic control.

"Next month we are planning an eight-hour Task Force operation aimed at unlicensed driver's," Bone said. "Motorists stopped on an observed violation will be cited or arrested and their vehicles towed." A tow truck will be on standby, and additional officers will be brought in.

"We have taken a much more aggressive stance toward moving violations in the last two to three years," Bone said. He believes that this, combined with the special Task Force operations begun last July, have slowed traffic and made the streets safer. "We are working on this routinely with every officer on every shift," he said.

Albany police also use plain clothes officers in cross walks to apprehend motorists who fail to recognize pedestrian



DAVE GREER
Man About Town

rights. These police decoys are deployed in many Bay Area cities including Berkeley where crosswalk violations are so frequent the city now provides pedestrians with orange flags to halt traffic at some locations. Even so, one flag-bearer has been hit by a car at this writing.

Failure to stop for a pedestrian in a cross walk brings a \$77 ticket. A red light citation is \$271; ignoring a stop sign costs \$104. And here are the speeding fines: \$103 for one to 15 miles per hour over the limit; \$162 for 16 to 25 mph over; \$270 for 26 mph and above over the limit.

So if the siren sounds for you in Albany, don't say the Man About Town didn't warn you.

THE MUSIC MAN: The man of the hour for me at the grand opening of the Albertson's superstore in the El Cerrito Plaza was Brian Barfield, director of bands at El Cerrito High School.

Barfield's plan was that he and four of his students would play at the opening before the ceremonies began. Unfortunately, neither the trumpeter nor the saxophonist showed. That left Barfield playing trombone solos backed by Stephanie Shih on electric piano and John Adams on drums.

The slide trombone is a wonderful instrument, but not many have the ability or confidence to stand up before a crowd and solo for the whole gig. The usual choice for this demanding work is a nimble instrument more at home higher up the scale like the trumpet, clarinet, or saxophone.

However, Barfield rose to the occasion and gave first-rate renditions of a number of tunes including the Duke Ellington

See GREER, Page A8

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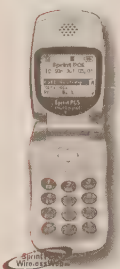
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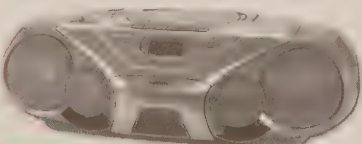


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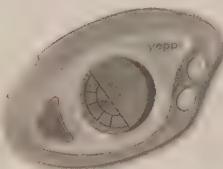


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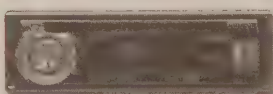
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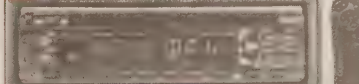


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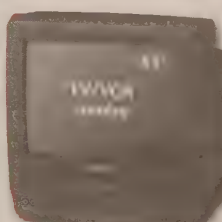


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Opinion

EDITORIAL

Remember those lost — keep 'homelights' burning

Amid the front-page stories of continued energy concerns, it's been suggested that perhaps those concerns should be the impetus to have a solemn, darkened Christmas to honor those lost in the attacks of Sept. 11.

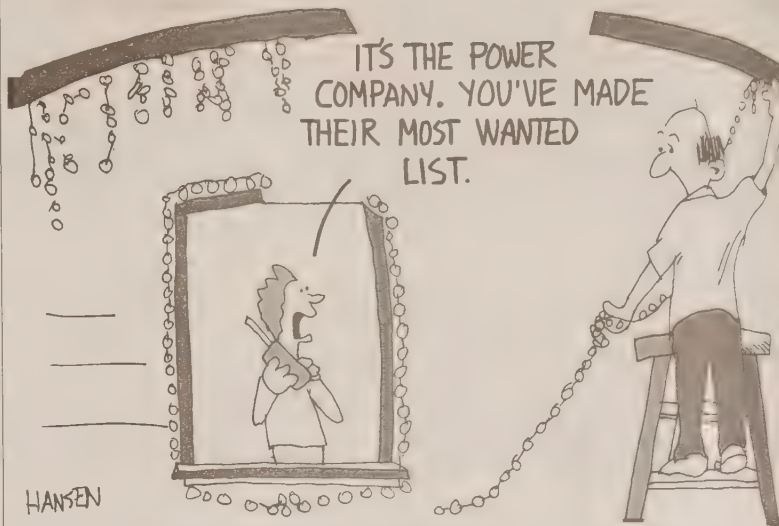
But of all years, this is the Christmas that should not go dark. At a time when the sadness of the last three months is still palpable for many residents, the holidays give us an opportunity to smile, to laugh and to honor those we love, and loved, with a warmth and gladness of spirit.

This is the time of the year when things smell better, when people smile more, when hugs and good wishes are the greetings of the day. It is not a time to withdraw into ourselves in the shadows, but to reach out to others in the glow of lights.

Twinkling lights on the houses transform an ordinary neighborhood street into a fairyland. Even a spokeswoman from the California Energy Commission said residents deserve a few strings of lights after the successful summer conservation. Of course, energy concerns should still be considered and huge expensive decorating extravaganzas may not be the order of the day.

Whether residents are celebrating the glory of Christmas, the joy of Hanukkah, the festivities of Kwanzaa or any other winter celebrations, this is a time for remembering the happy moments and reveling in those memories. It's a time of sharing stories with children so that the memories and the stories will continue on for generations.

No, this of all Christmases is not one that should be dark. Instead, we should honor those we lost with light.



Get kids up and about

WHEN IT COMES TO KIDS, there's always something. This time they've failed their statewide fitness tests ... badly. Fifth-, seventh- and ninth-graders tested in the spring and 77 percent failed. As horrible as that number is, it's slightly deceptive. It's a six-part test and not successfully completing any one part equals failure of the test. In fact, 49 percent of students tested met five of the six standards set on the test.

Still, there's a definite problem. This test, these six standards, are not set to find the next Michael Jordan or Jerry Rice. The test assesses six fitness areas: cardiovascular endurance, percentage of body fat, abdominal strength, trunk strength and flexibility, overall flexibility and upper body strength and endurance. It's a measure of health, not athletic ability. With 77 percent of more than a million students unable to pass all six components, we have something to be concerned about. Bringing it closer to home, only 19 percent of Contra Costa County youths who tested passed and 22 percent of those in Alameda passed.

In some ways the schools are failing the children. Many have cut out recess and although some physical education is required, physical education teachers are not. Time and money constraints put physical education on the bottom rung of schools' most important lessons.

But parents, too, must take a major portion of the blame for our out-of-shape youths. We should be encouraging their bike-riding and skating and skateboarding. Instead, we allow too much TV time, too much computer activity and too many video games. Instead of encouraging our children to walk, we drive them everywhere. They certainly won't have great nearly true stories to tell their children about walking a mile to school, uphill both ways.

The way we allow them to eat, in school and at home — with multiple doses daily of sodas and coffees and sugary-laden fruit juices, few vegetable and fruits and much too much junk — is not helping them physically.

And we teach them very little, by word or deed, regarding the value of exercise. Daily exercise is thought to reduce the rate of depression and increase alertness and energy level. As you do your Christmas shopping remember that PlayStation and Xbox don't count as physical activity.

Parents must encourage their children to be active, even if it means you must get out and play with them. Engineer bike-riding, hiking and other excursions. Take advantage of the fantastic parks in the area. Kick around a ball, walk the dog. Walk around to enjoy the neighborhood Christmas light displays instead of driving. This is another opportunity for quality time with your kids.

PE class at school should not be kids' only exercise of the day. It must be a habit; yet it can be enjoyable. And Brenda VanLengen of the national fitness advocacy group of P.E.4Life makes an excellent point: "What good is it if a student knows everything out of a textbook then dies of a heart attack at 27?"

HOW TO REACH US

Letters to the editor reflect the opinion of the writer. Letters must include your first and last name, address and daytime phone number. All letters are subject to verification. All letters are subject to editing for brevity and style. Not all letters may be published.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

No peace on Earth

It's Christmastime and there's no peace on Earth! It's time to reflect on the causes of the wars and unrest that have gone on for thousands of years.

We now live in a different, smaller world and we can't afford to wage war against "another" people. We all depend on one another and in order for mankind to continue, we must learn to live together. History has taught us that wars have created more hatred and the need for future generations to wage war to "avenge" the past.

We have to think about the "other" person and what his or her needs are. Are they really so different from our needs? Is it fair that some have so much while others don't even have the basics they need?

We must realize that those who commit crimes are part of our society and that something must have gone wrong to create these people. The least we can do is deal with their problem and not to treat them as outcasts.

We must learn to accept people for who they are and not what their ethnic, racial, political or religious background may be. Can we think about acts of kindness that may help understanding worldwide?

With good will, there is a way. Let us try to make a better world where we can truly mean it when we say peace on Earth!

Ilse Hadda
El Cerrito

Looking back

In order to understand the recent background of the Middle East strife, it is important to realize that it was Yasser Arafat who was instrumental in the election of Ariel Sharon as prime minister of Israel.

The previous prime minister, Ehud Barak, had offered the most far-reaching concessions for peace at Taba. These included the partition of Jerusalem, dismantling settlements, accepting a number of Arab refugees and compensating others, and expecting a Palestinian state.

That was when Arafat, without making a counter proposal, unleashed the intifada with suicide bombing and indoctrinating children to become "martyrs." Thoroughly disenchanted, the Israeli public elected a hard-liner, Sharon.

The irony is that a final peace agreement can only be along the lines of the Barak proposal and the intifada will have been a terrible waste of lives and economic assets, creating more poverty and hate, which will make it harder to come to any peace agreement.

Ray H. Redel
Albany

Seek spiritual growth

Letter writer Morris Cleland's vision, "It would be wonderful if peace and love could overcome everything" vanishes with his lack of faith in it: "but it is not going to happen."

Haven't we all been moved by the

power of love, only to have our attention drift back to our love of power? True love is about self-sacrifice. To live in peace with our brothers and sister will always call for us to wage war against our own lower nature. It is my understanding that this war is the true meaning of "jihad" — a holy war, a spiritual occupation.

Thomas Jefferson's recommendation of eternal vigilance for bringing about peace is essential if there is to be victory for the higher nature over the lower. I strongly suggest exercising this vigilance when listening to simplistic statements, such as, "Killing some 3,000 innocent people and inflicting pain and sorrow on countless other for no logical reason is evil."

Consider the following: M. Scott Peck, in his book, "People of the Lie," reiterated his definition of evil as the exercise of political power, the imposition of one's will upon others by overt or covert coercion in order to avoid spiritual growth. In other words, the evil attack others instead of facing their own failures.

Ron Greenstein
El Cerrito

Americans beware

Have we had enough revenge? At least 3,700 Afghan civilians killed versus some 3,000 in our September tragedy. Millions are in danger of starvation there.

George W. Bush, et al, succeeded in terrifying us into hysterics and pseudo-patriotism while destroying a country already devastated by decades of war and a three-year drought.

But one of their goals, a long-desired oil line by some U.S. companies through Afghanistan, will be realized as we rebuild that country with billions of tax dollars from our country. Revenge may be sweet but it is costly.

"Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves." Matthew 7:15.

Marion K. Matlin
El Cerrito

Examine our stance

I don't know that we could have prevented the Sept. 11 tragedy, any more than we could have prevented the Holocaust. In both cases, inaction allowed the terrorism to continue.

I believe there are many things we must do. Besides condemning all acts of terrorism, we must take concrete steps to stop it from happening — whether in the United States, Israel or other countries.

We must not be afraid to condemn and attack those who call for these acts of barbarism, and stop them in the same way we would stop someone who is "inciting to riot." This includes leaders of state, generals in an army or preachers in a mosque.

While we need to preserve the right of people to practice any religion, we must not allow those who would subvert that religion to use it as a shield. We must move against those states that train and harbor

terrorists.

Also, we must not be afraid to stand why this occurred. I believe that the most part, it has to do with what Palestinians call "naqba," which means "catastrophe," referring to the establishment of the state of Israel in Palestine.

It is primarily U.S. support of Israel that has brought the hatred of the Arab world of Islam (since it is called a "kafir" by some Muslim leaders) to our shores.

We must evaluate our support of Israel. If we find it to be a liability, we should discontinue it. However, I believe it is just, then we should end it and continue with it.

Wasting time

I am 55 years old and have done many things in my life and seen many. While in the Navy, I heard a person say, "The Boy Scouts have it all over us. We have adult leaders."

I look and listen to what is going on between Palestinian and Israeli and I think back to that statement.

People who would rather argue something have lost valuable time. Could have been used to work on something. I remember my mother saying, "The time you have here trying to get out of what you are here to have to do, you could have done it."

This hate for hate's sake is a waste of time and billions of dollars.

Gene M...

Oppose 'retribution'

We oppose the bombing of Afghanistan as justifiable "retribution." Sept. 11 represents a crime against humanity. We do not oppose the capture of Osama bin Laden and his support.

We must assemble and present world evidence of guilt and seek justice through international law, using the possible amount of force to bring those who collaborated with the perpetrators to justice. We believe killing Osama bin Laden is the problem, not the solution.

As a distinguished Buddhist leader, Daisaku Ikeda, recently said, "Peace that is based on the oppression of other nations' voices and concerns is a dead peace, the peace of a grave. Surely that is not the peace humanity is seeking."

We concur with the National Labor Guild that "The universal desire is for safe and secure."

The only path to safety and security is through international law, vengeance and retaliation.

Brown is board chairman of the Albany-based East Bay Peace Action.

BART's barking up wrong tree with drug-nosing dogs

Once again, there seems to be no final answer to this question: "How can you get?"

But when I'm riding BART, I often find myself asking the question: "How can you get?"

It's not about the money, it's about the way he feels about us, good riddance.



MARTIN SNAPP
Snapp Shots

trying to sniff out potheads. Talk about misplaced priorities!

Speaking of pot, Jeremy Giambi of the A's got busted with a small amount last week — which gives me a perfect segue to the next order of business; namely, trashing his older brother, Jason.

Jason was on the David Letterman show last Friday, reading the night's Top 10 list: "Why I decided to become a Yankee." And answer No. 3 was, "Have you ever seen Oakland?"

Ha ha ha — not! — Who does this jerk think he is? No sooner does he skip town for the big bucks in the Big Apple (proving once again the old baseball adage: "Whenever a player says,

'It's not about the money,' then he turns around and trashes a fine city that doesn't deserve it. The guy might be a great player, but if that's the way he feels about us, good riddance.

It's only good manners to thank someone for their Christmas present. So on behalf of all of us, let me thank Kate, Matheus, Brooke, Benjamin, Ellie, Lucas, Izumi, Martin, Carl, Sophie, Chaityn, Joseph, Drisa, Jimmy, Darion, Vivian, Jaci and Raymond — all members of Ms. Shepherd's kindergarten class at Marin School in Albany — for making those exquisite holiday posters now gracing storefront windows on Solano and San Pablo avenues.

Thanks also to the second-graders in Ms. Rynerson's class, the third-graders in Ms. Keret's class, and the fifth-graders in Ms. Zullo's and Ms. Staton's classes, who also made beautiful Holiday posters.

The fifth graders' creations are quite witty. (I especially liked Molly's depiction of a

snowman nonchalantly leaning against a fence.) The third-graders' creations remind me of Chagall.

But I'm blown away by the creativity of the kindergarteners. I couldn't figure out how they achieved those delicate snowfall effects in the background until their teacher, Maggie Shepherd, told me their secret: bubbles!

They mixed equal parts water, detergent and "about a ton of white paint" in Tupperware containers. Then they blew into the concoction with a straw until they had a mass of white bubbles, which they applied to the paper.

"At first, I kept warning them, 'Now remember, blow into the straws; don't suck,'" says Shepherd. "But then one boy said, 'Don't worry, Ms. Shepherd. I already know how to blow bubbles. I do it all the time in my bubble bath.'"

Go see the stunning results for yourself. But even more impressive than the kids' virtuosity is their generosity. The real reason they made these posters

was to give the rest of us some badly needed Christmas cheer.

Think about it. This is a holiday season like no other. The shock and sadness of Sept. 11 still hang over us like a baleful cloud. More than ever before, we should be comforting our children. How touching it is to see them reaching out to comfort us, instead.

Thanks, kids. We needed that. Merry Christmas, and may next year be a better one for all of us.

Lots of you have been calling to ask if the Christmas caroling for Mr. Charles, the Berkeley Waving Man, went off as scheduled on Sunday. Answer: Yes, and we all had a great time. Thanks to everyone who showed up.

And thanks, too, to those who left messages on my voice mail saying they couldn't make it but wished Mr. Charles well anyway. I passed each and every one of your greetings on to him, and he was absolutely delighted.

Same time next year, OK?

Finally, let me wish you a

merry Christmas — not "happy holidays." I hope I'm not offending anyone by using the dreaded C-word, but Christmas is my favorite holiday. And I'm Jewish!

Remember the Levy's Rye Bread advertising slogan, "You don't have to be Jewish to love Levy's"? Well, You don't have to be Christian to love Christmas.

I'm not talking about Frosty and Santa. I mean the real thing: the Nativity story. It has a sweetness that appeals to everyone, whether you believe Jesus was the Messiah or not. (If you do, so much the better.) And even when I was a little kid, I could appreciate the delicious irony: If those innkeepers only knew who they were turning away!

So have a merry Christmas. And let's remember the wise words of Ben Franklin: "How many observe Christ's birthday! How few, his precepts! O! 'Tis easier to keep holidays than comandments."

E-mail Martin Snapp at catman@california.com or call him at 510-273-9039.

Gifts for the food and travel enthusiast on your list



MIKE CLEARY
The Food and Travel Enthusiast

years running by New York diners in the well-regarded Zagat Survey, Union Square Cafe is known for its simple but imaginative dishes. Recipes aside, I enjoyed the authors' whimsical and entertaining approach to cookbook photography.

If you're a macaroni and cheese fan like our daughter Amanda, you'll enjoy "Macaroni & Cheese: 52 Recipes from Simple to Sublime" by Joan Schwartz (Villard, \$15.95). According to Joan, some of America's best known chefs are putting their own creative spin on this All-American dish and adding it to their menus. She includes their recipes as well as her own.

Another winner is "The New Alaska Cookbook: Recipes from the Last Frontier's Best Chefs" by Kim Severson (Sasquatch Books, \$19.95). She spent eight years working as a journalist writing about that state's food and restaurants before moving to San Francisco where she is a newspaper food editor.


Severson, along with chef

Glenn Denkler, has assembled 120 easy-to-follow recipes of Alaska's finest chefs. Take this one to bed with you one night. Her biographies of the chefs are utterly fascinating.

Kim's book is my clever segue into the first of two armchair travel recommendations. Peter Jenkins is the author of "Looking for Alaska" (St. Martin's Press, \$25.95). Jenkins first made a name for himself when, as a disillusioned 24-year-old, he walked across America and wrote a best-selling memoir about the adventure.

In "Looking for Alaska" Jenkins leaves his Tennessee

See CLEARY, Page A9



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Teach your children well, and enjoy them again as adults

At the end of our conversation, as I always do in these interviews, I asked Roberta Maisel for a summing up statement. Since our conversation had had to do with her recently published book "All Grown Up", subtitled "Living Happily Ever After With Your Adult Children", Maisel's statement was very clear: "Find an activity you can do with your adult children. It's called sharing, and it should be something that you both like, and neither has a superiority. Life is too short to spend it in anger. And it is important to fill your life with laughter and joy. What better person to do this with than your older children."

I could almost end this story with that statement, because it truly ties up all the loose ends of our daily living leaves about. But there is more to Roberta Maisel than that, and more to her book that must be discussed.

The day I was first introduced to Roberta and her book, one member of our little group, a man, said, "Her chapter on loneliness could have been written for me. I have been far



CLARA-RAE GENSER
Community Folk

happier since I read it and started to follow her advice." That pricked my interest, and was the reason for the interesting interview a few days later.

First, who is Roberta Maisel, and what led her to the writing of this book? Born in New York City, Roberta's interest and avocation was always music, principally the piano.

"All my life I played somebody's music. I played with a violinist and again with a flutist. Bach and Mozart and more. I could play by ear and could improvise, so that I could accompany people or play alone. I played at nursing homes and sing alongs. Mostly for the love of it, and I thank the lord for giving me an ear which allows me to enjoy the music I love, both listening and playing, through no work of

my own."

Roberta received a bachelor's degree from Brandeis, and a master's degree in sociology from UC Berkeley. She had a brief stint teaching at the college level. At various times in her life she has been a teacher, antique shop owner, piano accompanist and political activist working with and for Central American refugees, homeless people and Middle East Peace.

She and her late husband owned and ran an antique shop in Piedmont for many years. Writing only came later, when she became widowed in 1993, at the age of 58, and needed a new direction in her life.

"I had always loved writing, but never written anything much," she says. "Just an occasional newsletter. Then, when my husband died I, had a kind of call, a sense of destiny. I wanted to write."

She wrote short stories, and tried to get them published. Then she read a book on small presses that inspired her to send things around. She received honorable mention in a short story contest and won first prize in the same contest

the following year. Then she went to visit a friend, who told her she was having a problem with one of her grown children. "I wish there was a book I could read that would help with adult children."

Then, Maisel says, "I heard myself say, 'Let's write one.' They worked together in the beginning, and Roberta continued after her friend's life "went in a different direction."

In her acknowledgments in the book, Robert thanks her friend, Nicole Milner, for the inspiration and for helping her with the earlier stages of "All Grown Up." She also thanks her brother-in-law, Eric Maisel, an author, who taught her how to write a book proposal and encouraged her to send around the proposal and one chapter (she chose "Communication With Your Children").

She received 20 rejections, and was deciding to look for a full time job, when she came across a magazine called "The Writer" that gave her the information she needed to send it out once more, to a small publisher in British Columbia.

A couple of months later she

received an e-mail saying the publisher was interested. She says they were very helpful and did all of the things they said they would do. I found their statement at the back of the book and was fascinated by their specialties and their environmental awareness, including a list of the resources the New Society Publishers had saved in that commitment. Lovely. She discussed the problems people face, in this day of increased longevity, in relationships, not only with adult children, but even with adult grandchildren.

Roberta has a 94-year-old mother, who has a 43-year-old grandson, and a mother-in-law who is 92, so she is well aware of the parent/adult/child relationships. She points out small things, such as parents who continue to remind their adult children to "remember to send a card to Auntie," or "Don't forget to thank Uncle Bill." Things you would say to teen-agers.

"I try to convince them that they don't have to do that any more. They should take a step back and realize the things that were the center of their lives are not the center any more, that they should make the cen-

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Greer

FROM PAGE A3

classics "Mood Indigo," "Take the A Train," and "Don't Get Around Much Anymore."

One of the few other times I've seen a combo built around a trombonist was years ago at a cool Santa Barbara music lounge. Playing indoors, this fellow was able to use mutes to create the illusion there were several instruments present. And he improvised so well I assumed he was a jazz great whom I did not recognize. Wrong. He was a Hollywood studio musician on a working vacation. One never knows where such a wonder will turn up.

Talking to Barfield after the Plaza performance, I learned that the slip horn was his primary instrument, but that band directors have to learn all the instruments — yes, all — in order to instruct their students. I found this amazing as I have been trying to master the cornet for over half a century, and my second instrument is the kazoo.

This multi-talented man told me that El Cerrito High (about 1,390 students) has a robust music program with over 200 youngsters either playing instruments or in the choir.

Barfield has a 56-member concert band that plays classical music, and a symphony group with 64 advanced players. They put on four concerts a year.

He also teaches a beginning level jazz band with 23 young-

sters and an advanced ensemble with 20 members. When not doing anything else, Barfield conducts a 15-piece marching band that plays at football games as well as in the Solano Stroll and at a Kensington parade. Barfield says Jocelyn Gooch instructs 45 choir students.

In his first year at ECHS, Barfield says he, "inherited a great program that previous band directors built up and that I plan to take further."

He also gives the West Contra Costa County School District credit for "the enormous support which it has given music programs which many districts don't have."

The music man reports that 85 percent of his students began playing in elementary school and the rest in middle schools, primarily Portola,

where band director Paul Yonemura has an excellent program. Only one or two of Barfield's students started playing at the high school level.

All of this is good news in times when many art and music programs are being cut back.

Every child who wants to should have the opportunity to learn music. For many it be-

comes a joyful, lifetime interest; for others the way to make or augment a living; and for some a door to opportunities not otherwise available.

Meeting Brian Barfield and watching him play Ellington in four flats has encouraged me to try for two, but I'm not making any resolutions I might have to break before the new year even begins.

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to the rescue of Rescue Mission

The Bay Area Rescue Mission is seeking donors to supply 3,000 turkeys for the Richmond Community's Christmas dinner. The mission is a great response to the Bay Area community to supply turkeys at the Richmond Community's Christmas dinner. Executive Director Anderson said, "But we received requests for 700 turkeys from families in need."

Anderson said the organization has enough ham and turkey Christmas meals for its guests, but the food distribution to the community's poor families will be a great help unless donations are made.

Donations to the Bay Area Rescue Mission can be made at 100 Macdonald Ave. in Richmond. For more information, call 510-215-1234.

for golf camps set

Boys and girls ages 7-17 are invited to participate in a series of camps.

of Nike Junior Holiday Golf Camps at the Tilden Park golf course and two other Golf Learning Centers. The half-day and two-day camps will be held at American Golf's Tilden Park Golf Course in Berkeley on Dec. 27-28, 29-30 and Jan. 2-3; The Reserve at Spanos Park Golf Course in Stockton on Dec. 17-21 (half-day camp), 27-28 and Jan. 2-3; and at Monarch Bay Golf Club (formerly San Leandro Golf Club) Dec. 22-23, 27-28, 29-30 and Jan. 5-6.

The camps are open to juniors of all skill levels at a cost of \$149 per student, and include two days of instruction in golf fundamentals such as full swing, putting and chipping — as well as golf rules and etiquette, scoring, how to reserve a tee time, and other important "transition to play" elements. Also included for each student are lunch each day; a Nike Golf cap; a Nike Junior Golf Camp workbook; and on-course instruction. Half-day camps are Monday through Friday with three hours of instruction per day and are offered as low as \$195.

A group instruction program offers new golfer, intermediate and advanced levels, so that students learn alongside others of

their own ability and progress at their own pace. Tee It Up 1 for the new golfer is designed to put the fun back into learning. The program offers a comprehensive introduction to golf package for as low as \$149 that includes six hours of instruction encompassing chipping, putting and full-swing fundamentals, five rounds of golf, membership in the American Golf Players Association, a USGA introduction to golf videotape, and a bag tag. The program also includes golf facility and course tours, equipment overview, state-of-the-art video analysis, practice drills, instruction on rules and etiquette, information on the importance of pace of play, and "transition to play" on-course instruction. Tee It Up 2 for intermediate golfer and Tee It Up 3 for advanced players are also available.

For more information call toll-free at 877-312-4653. More information on Nike Golf can be found on-line at www.nikegolfclub.com.

Christmas Tea at the Cohen Bray Home

The Victorian Preservation

delicacies. Participants may bring their teapots and saucers for show-and-tell. There is a \$5 fee (\$7 for nonresidents) and registration is required. The 19th annual New Year's Eve hike is from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Dec. 31. Hikers, who will hear about customs and traditions from around the world, are advised to dress warmly. There is no fee. All events take place at Tilden's nature area or will begin there. The nature area is at the north end of Central Park Drive off Wildcat Canyon Road and there are signs throughout the park to direct visitors. Call 510-625-2233 for information.

A free Boxing Day bird walk and celebration is scheduled from 9 a.m. to noon Dec. 26. Walkers will look for the wren, the king of all birds in Irish and English folklore. Traditional music and refreshments will follow the walk. Beginners are welcome and binoculars are available to borrow.

Those 10 years and older may help clear non-native plants from the park's nature area from 10 a.m. to noon Dec. 30. Bring work gloves and water. Call to register.

A New Year's Eve tea is scheduled from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Dec. 31. Visitors age 8 and older may sample teas from around the world, as well as various

Then there's "Driving Mr. Albert: A Trip Across America with Einstein's Brain" by Michael Paterniti (Delta Trade Paperback, \$10.95). Newsweek described it as a work of "uncommon intelligence." My sentiments exactly. I would love to hear what you think about it.

Mary Ann wanted me to add that a magazine subscription always makes a good last-minute gift.

For the food and travel enthusiast on your list, there's a new publication called "Wine

Country Living" (800-799-2679, \$21 for six issues.) Buy a newsstand issue, put it in a wine gift bag with a note indicating that more are on their way.

Happy Holidays.

Mike Cleary's column appears every other week in this newspaper. He and his wife, Mary Ann, co-host "The Food and Travel Enthusiasts" radio program at 10 a.m. Sundays on KABL, 960 AM. Readers can e-mail Mike at mc@foodandtravelradio.com.

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Center of Oakland invites you to join them for a Christmas Tea on Saturday, Dec. 29, at the Cohen Bray Home, 1440 29th Ave. in Oakland.

The landmark house offers Christmas spirit in Victorian splendor. Learn about the home and the Fruitvale neighborhood as it was in the past. This event will begin with a tour of the upper portion of the house, tea in the formal dining room served in heirloom tea cups by maids in Victorian dress, then on to the parlor, study and finally into the redwood room where over 20 undecorated trees fill your senses as you hear of 116-year-old family Christmas traditions and view the 20-foot decorated tree.

The Cohen Bray Home has been lived in by members of the same family since 1884 and features the original furniture, decor and family memories. This home is an Oakland Historic Land-

mark, and on the National Register of Historic Places. The house is now owned by the Victorian Preservation Center of Oakland although family members still call it home.

Proceeds from these events help support the society's goal of developing a study center to help preserve the material culture and history of the Bay Area in the 116 years since the house was built.

The tea will seatings at 2, 3 and 4 p.m. Reservations are required. The cost is \$20 general admission and \$15 for members of the Victorian Preservation Center of Oakland.

Call 510-843-2906 for information and reservations.

Jazzschool announces winter 2002 quarter

Registration for the Jazzschool's winter 2002 quarter at

St. in Berkeley, will take place Jan. 2-11, with placement auditions and consultations scheduled for the same time. The 10-week quarter, Jan. 14-March 29, includes over 125 classes and workshops.

To obtain a catalog or application, contact the Jazzschool at 510-845-5373, or by e-mail, swing@jazzschool.com.

Four courses may be taken for credit (as well as on a "not for credit" basis) through the UC Berkeley Extension: African Music, Past to Present; Jazz Piano Comprehensive; Jazz Theory and Improvisation; and Vocal Technique — Full Body Singing.

A limited number of scholarships are offered, based on merit and financial need, through contributions to the East Bay Community Foundation earmarked for the Jazzschool Educational Scholarship Program.

Recall

FROM PAGE A1

Kendall served Skinner and Cain notice of the recall move.

Kendall was upset, he said, about what he called the board's poor bargaining practices with the teachers union. He also contended that the board ignored its civic duties when the members walked out of a December meeting last year citing crowd noise as a distraction.

The group targeted Skinner and Cain, they said, because it was believed they had a negative influence on the rest of the board during budget talks.

Kendall did not return the Journal's phone calls.

Just before the board's special meeting Tuesday — at which it agreed to form a budgetary management team to handle next year's projected shortfall of more than \$700,000 — Skinner ex-

pressed relief that the recall issue apparently is over.

"I'm pleased that the district doesn't have to spend the money — it's money the district doesn't have," she said.

A special election would have cost the district between \$1.50 to \$3.50 a voter, the registrar said.

Plaza

FROM PAGE A1

Work has already started on the building on the center's south side and Engberg said the stores there will remain in place during renovation.

"There have been noises made about recalls; it's kind of the latest thing," said Skinner, referring to similar situations this year in Livermore and Emeryville. "The job is demanding enough. We spend our time doing a lot of things that the public doesn't see."

The final piece of the puzzle is the building vacated by Al-bertson's when it opened its mega-supermarket. Site plans showed a Bally's Fitness Center there and Engberg said Bally's is still interested, but that Regency is talking to other retailers as well.

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Best books for holiday gift-giving for young people

Bus

FROM PAGE A1

with the current \$27. AC Transit currently receives about \$5 million from student passes. In order to break even during the pilot program, the district will have to sell an additional 8,900 passes at the discounted \$15 price.

The bus passes would be made available in schools, supermarkets and elsewhere at the start of next school year.

The project is "an amazing start" that could help student performance and return some of the \$900,000 that absences cost the district each year, said Glen Price, a trustee for the West Contra Costa school district.

Initial proposals called for a longer subsidy program that would have more than doubled the cost.

As it stands, the district's annual \$1 million in transit passes is a small fraction of the \$5 million that the district receives from the state for each student.

Arner said the Berkeley researchers' effectiveness of the passes and free zone.

The plan to launch this year on the Transportation Center for Bay Area students, including over the century. The district expected to sign off on the day.

In particular, North Richmond said that the district's budget issue was a lack of

Creek

FROM PAGE A1

plan will be to design public access and amenities as part of that project and grant funds are being sought.

About 20 people attended Monday's council meeting to encourage the council to accept the dedication offer and begin efforts to restore the creek.

"This is a major step toward carrying out your 1999 General Plan," said Friends of Five Creeks president Susan Schwartz. The city's revised General Plan lists creek improvements and restoration among its goals and policies. El Cerrito resident Carla Koop, also with Friends of Five Creeks, strongly urged the council to act, saying a restored Cerrito Creek

would be a wonderful addition to the city's parks and recreation system.

Council members said the need for ongoing work on the creek was a priority for the city, and that the project was an important part of the city's efforts to improve the Bay Trail effort.

"We have heard a lot of talk about the creek, but we haven't done much to make that work gets done," said Koop. "No one will be able to do it if all we do is stand around and plant a few willows. They're going to want this integrated with the Greenway and the Bay Trail. That's when the project will be considered complete."

By Barbara Sloane
CORRESPONDENT

Here comes my annual plea: Give children books for holiday gifts. There are always plenty to choose from, some specific to the season, and others just fun, exciting or educational for anytime. Our Bay Area authors and illustrators never fail to provide us with many excellent choices.

"Who Is Coming to Our House?" by Joseph Slate, pictures by Ashley Wolff (Puffin Books, \$6.99, 32 pages). This charming paperback sets the scene for the first Christmas as the stable animals prepare for some special visitors. Perfect read-aloud book for the 2-6 age group, with appealing animals drawn by San Franciscan Wolff.



"Hark! The Aardvark Angels Sing" by Teri Sloat (Putnam, \$15.99, 32 pages). Such a silly book! But surely children from 4 to 8 will find it great fun. If you ever wondered how the mail carriers manage to deliver the billions of Christmas cards — well, the secret is out.

Author/illustrator Sloat shows readers the hordes of aardvark angels (one complete with trumpet) who rush the mail all over the globe. The rhyming text actually fits the melody of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," and music is provided, so the whole family can sing along.

"Jesus, This Is Your Life: Stories & Pictures by Kids" edited by Jeff Kunkel (Augsburg Books, \$12.99, 48 pages). Kunkel is an Oakland author, artist and ordained United Methodist minister. Although his own writings have been published, he turned to boys and girls he works with throughout the East Bay to write a new biography of Jesus. In this imaginative book, we can read and see the life of Jesus through the words and eyes of children

from ages 5 to 12.

The stories are told with a child's contemporary spin, and the pictures vibrate with bold colors and graphic details. Each storyteller and artist is identified. What better book to introduce children to Jesus' life than one told by their peers. Obviously the children (and their editor) did a good job, because their book was chosen as the Best Children's Book of 2001 by the American Theologian Booksellers Association.

"EZ Reading: From A to Z" by Michelle Ann Goosby, illustrations by Bruce K. Hopkins (Dorrance, \$13.00, 93 pages). For an educational tool designed to help a child's reading proficiency, Alameda resident Goosby has created an easy to use manual based on phonetics.

Beginning with charts describing 44 phonetic sounds, the author moves onto the major portion of her book, which is comprised of one-page short stories, each based on a specific sound. The lively black and white drawings accompanying each story invite children to add colors to them, even as they practice the sounds. This is a different, clever take on helping children enjoy reading.

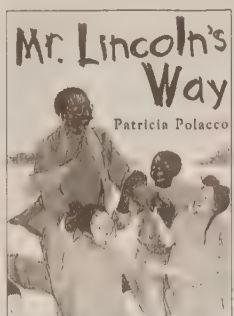
"Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten" by Joseph Slate, illustrated by Ashley Wolff (Puffin Paperback, \$6.99, 40 pages) and "Miss Bindergarten Takes a Field Trip" (\$16.99, 40 pages).

Slate and Wolff make an excellent team, producing books to delight preschoolers. The border collie teacher, Miss Bindergarten, is well-known to many young readers. Also loved are the 26 animal children in her class, whose names from A (Adam Alligator) to Z (Zach Zebra) cover the alphabet. No child who has been exposed to Miss Bindergarten's kindergarten can ever dread the first day of school.

"Vinnie in France" by Elizabeth Bott, illustrated by Guido Frosini and Alessandra Cecchetti (Pageturner Books, \$15.99, 50 pages).

Here's that crazy cat Vinnie again, embarking on his travels. Last seen in Egypt, Vinnie now explores France with his adventures told in verse by author Bott and illustrated brightly and wackily by the teenage cousins, Frosini and Cecchetti, grandchildren of Montclair residents, Richard and Doris Nivens. Along Vinnie's outrageous trail through

France, young readers will actually learn quite a bit about French history and customs.



"Mr. Lincoln's Way" by Patricia Polacco (Philomel, \$16.99, 40 pages).

Former Oaklander Polacco has a distinctive artistic style easily recognized by her fans. Readers from ages 6 to 9 also recognize the warmth and kindness in her stories. Any child would want to have Mr. Lincoln as principal of his/her school. But "mean Gene" doesn't like Mr. Lincoln or anyone in his school. How the kindly principal touches and turns around Eugene's life truly points out the lesson about understanding others and acknowledging their differences.

"Sam Samurai" by Jon Scieszka, illustrated by Adam McCauley (Viking, \$14.99, 80 pages). Some elementary school readers may already know the Time Warp Trio, Joe, Sam and Fred. These three fifth-graders have in their possession "The Book," which magically transports them back in time.

Having previously found themselves in ancient Greece and then in the days of Roman gladiators, they now discover themselves surrounded by Japanese samurai in the time of Tokugawa.

Author Scieszka has seized upon a clever formula to entice readers into learning about ancient cultures, especially since these stories include lots of action and humor. In this particular adventure, Joe, Sam and Fred even learn how to write haiku for their teacher, Ms. Basho (an "in joke").

"Once Upon A Fairytale: Four Favorite Stories Retold by the Stars" with 21 celebrity authors and 21 award-winning illustrators (Viking, \$29.99, 80 pages). This gift book produced under Steven Spielberg's direction is intended to benefit the Starbright Foundation. Starbright funds a variety of programs to help seriously ill children live richer, more fulfilling lives.

"Once Upon A Fairytale" is really for all ages. The cast of celebrities taking part in the stories ranges from Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf to Glenn Close, and from Martha Stewart to Robin Williams. Included with the book is a full-length CD with the cast performing "The Frog Prince," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Rumpelstiltskin," and "Goldilocks and the Three Bears."

With Mike Myers as Rumpelstiltskin or Calista Flockhart as Goldilocks you can imagine that there is quite a modern spin on these stories. The magnificent, full page, color illustrations are done by a veritable Who's Who of children's book illustrators. Chris Van Allsburg, Barry Moser, Mary Engelbreit and J. Otto Seibold are just four of the well-known artists. "Once Upon A Fairytale" presents the possibility of a wonderful evening's entertainment, reading and listening to new takes on some familiar tales.

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Real Estate & Home

Advertising supplement to The Berkeley Voice, The Journal, The Montclairian, The Piedmonter

Friday, December 21, 2001

Section B

Weekly Home Sales Maintain your focus on the East Bay real estate scene [B5]

Open Home Guide See what's on sale in your neighborhood [B6]

A proposal for Albany's Key Route Boulevard

Key Route Boulevard in Albany and El Cerrito has an intriguing history that extends back over 100 years. Prior to the year 1900, passenger rail and ferry boat service was the exclusive purview of the Southern Pacific Railway.

Francis Marion "Borax" Smith challenged this monopoly in 1903. Smith proposed and developed a competing urban rail system with ferry boats to connect the system to San Francisco.

An observer noted that Smith's pier that connected the rail and ferry service looked like a gigantic key when observed from above. This observation gave the system its name: the Key Route.

At its peak the Key Route system served commuters from San Jose to San Leandro, Oakland and Berkeley.

The system in Berkeley ran down the center of Shattuck Avenue

into North Berkeley through the Thousand Oaks tunnel terminating at Solano Avenue and the Alameda.

Another line ran down Hoffman Boulevard into Richmond. Plans were developed to extend the line down Solano into the present-day Key Route Boulevard into El Cerrito. A broad space on the boulevard from Solano to Fairmont avenues was reserved for this extension.

When the Bay Bridge was completed, Key Route trains ran across the span, marking the system's high point. Pro-bus activists grew in number after World War II and by 1946 the system was sold to these pro-bus activists; Key Route services ended in 1958.

The extension on Key Route Boulevard never materialized. This area, particularly in Albany, is the focus of my discussion here. When the plan was abandoned, a wide is-

land of space remained. This width of this space varies.

In Albany the "island" is about 35 feet wide centered on a 96-foot curb-to-curb open area. One-way vehicular traffic travels on each side of the island.



JOHN ROLF HATTAM
Real Estate Forum

See PROPOSAL, Page B2



THE ISLAND THAT SEPARATES THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC on Albany's Key Route Boulevard, left, could be widened to accommodate 25 to 35 new two-story two-bedroom homes, below. The structures would include space for patios, gardens and two-car garages, right.



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Some lessons from Havana

Part two of three parts
When I first visited Havana in June of this year, there was a joke which some Cubans were telling that illustrates the disparity that exists between the majority of Cuban citizens and those that have access to the new so-called "dollar economy."

An elderly couple was sitting on a bench in one of Havana's parks, watching a group of school children playing. One of the boys seemed to be particularly bright, so the old man decided to talk to him.

"Little boy, you seem like a very intelligent young man," the elderly gentleman remarked. "Do you mind if I ask you a question?"

"Not at all, mister. Go right ahead."

"Do you know what you want to be when you grow up?"

"That's easy. I want to be the one thing that guarantees a good life in Cuba today."

"Oh—and what is that?"

"A tourist."

In 1993, Fidel Castro legalized the use of the US dollar for Cuban citizens to use in business transactions in Cuba. That year he also permitted citizens to go into business for themselves in over 100 categories, which included mechanics and repair, fishing, farming, taxi drivers, hairdressers, restaurateurs, and small residential hotel operators, just in case anyone thought undiluted socialism still existed on the island of Cuba—think again.

This radical change was necessitated by the sudden withdrawal of subsidies to Cuba from the old Soviet Union. By the late 1980s, the Soviets were giving a total of \$6 billion a year in economic aid, and \$1 billion per year in military aid—a huge amount in a nation of less than 12 million people. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, this aid, plus \$6 billion a year more in subsidized trade with the Russians, was suddenly halted, creating economic havoc and hardship.

Today, the existence of a dual economy can be seen in every aspect of Cuban society. There are really two economies here—one for those with access to dollars, and one for those who only have Cuban pesos. It is estimated that now about 50 per cent of the inhabitants of Havana have access to US dollars, and perhaps 30 per cent of the rest of Cuban citizens do.

One area that has been greatly affected by the dollar economy all of the small legal residential hotels

that cater to tourists. These are usually located in large, older private homes that were once owned by wealthy or middle class families, before Castro's regime took them over after the 1959 revolution. Such houses typically have several rooms for rent to tourists, and often provide breakfast for their guests. These establishments are known as "casa particulares."

The Cuban government provides a license to the citizens who operate these casa particulares for a hefty sum, and then collects a large percentage of the profits in income taxes. Some of these residential hotels are in buildings that were allowed to fall into disrepair, or may have been abandoned for many years, and therefore are in dire need of restoration before they can cater to foreign tourists.

In many such cases, the Cuban government has wooed foreign investors from Canada, Mexico, and Europe to enter into joint ventures, whereby the foreign investors put up most of the money for the restoration and remodeling of these residences, in exchange for a percentage of the profits. In some of these older buildings, the foreign investors operate a restaurant or "dollar shop" for consumer goods on part or all of the premises.

An especially charming casa particular in Havana was the one I stayed at, which is called simply Jaqueline's Place, after the woman who runs it. It is located on Avenida E, just east of La Rampa, in the Vedado District. The Vedado is a pleasant residential area with tree-lined streets and large homes built in the late 1800's and early 1900's that once belonged to middle class families.

Jaqueline's Place is in a lovely Edwardian Era house that was built between about 1914 and 1918. It still has the very high ceilings, cast iron grillwork over windows, wide verandah, and spacious rooms of the original house. The building was restored several years ago, and has a front parlor, dining room, kitchen, and rear sitting room, as well as several bedrooms with private baths for rent.

Throughout Jaqueline's Place, the rooms still retain much of their original, Edwardian Era furniture, including Baroque Revival style beds, Art Nouveau lamps, and a Baronial scale set of carved oak chairs and table in the dining room. Jaqueline lives with her family in a separate apartment in the rear of the building.

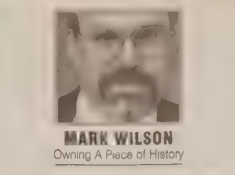
The rooms in Jaqueline's Place vary in size, and range in price from

\$30 to \$45 per night. She serves a full breakfast each morning for \$3 extra per person, including freshly squeezed juice and Café Cubano, or Cuban coffee.

Another aspect of Cuban society that has been effected by the dollar economy is the restoration of older individual family residences. Some of these historic homes are allowed to remain in private ownership within a family that has owned and occupied such a house since before the socialist revolution. In other cases, the Cuban government does allow a few of these older residences to be occupied by single families from important professions if they agree to restore them.

I had the pleasure of visiting such a private family residence in the Habana Central district. Habana Central is a residential area of closely-packed, two-to-five story houses and apartment buildings that were built between the early 1800's and the early 1900s. It lies just to the west of Habana Vieja.

On my first visit to Havana, I was shown around one of these gracious old private residences that was being restored by a family of professional people. Two cousins, Yohana and Yalith, gave me a tour



MARK WILSON
Owning A Piece of History

There are really two economies here, one for those with access to dollars, and one for those who only have Cuban pesos. It is estimated that now about 50 per cent of the inhabitants of Havana have access to US dollars, and perhaps 30 percent of the rest of Cuban citizens do.

of this lovely, turn-of-the-century, two story home. The house was occupied by Yohana, her mother, (a

See WILSON, Page B14



MARK WILSON

MANY LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY PRIVATE RESIDENCES such as this in Havana's old Vedado District have been abandoned for years, some since Castro came to power in 1959. Many of these are now being restored by foreign investors.

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Proposal

FROM PAGE B1

These island take up three and one-half blocks in the city of Albany. Decades ago cedar trees were planted on the islands. Many of these trees are in varying states of deterioration. The ground around the trees consists of weeds that the city cuts periodically, no doubt because funds are lacking to properly care for them.

I have driven down Key Route Boulevard for years, and sense a better use for this stretch of orphaned terrain. I offer the concept illustrated here as a solution that could meet a variety of needs.

The concept involves widening the center area to approximately 58 feet while retaining the present resident's curb and parking in front of the houses. This idea also retains the one-way traffic.

The widened center strip could accommodate 25 to 35 new two-bedroom townhomes — two-bedroom structures with ample adjacent patio and garden space plus a two-car garage. Well-designed fences and plantings would enclose the home groupings.

Extensive and creative planting would be developed between fences and curbs to enhance the entire four-block development. A homeowner's association would be responsible for care and maintenance of this public greenery, saving the city the cost for the upkeep.

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Wishing all our readers Happy Holidays & all the best for the New Year from the staff of Hills Newspapers Real Estate & Home section

A look around the real estate community (and the world) this holiday season

and information for and area real estate community and affiliated industries.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS
MERRY CHRISTMAS
HAPPY KWANZAA
FELIZ NAVIDAD
HAPPY HANUKKAH**

However you say it, however you choose to celebrate, the holidays are a time to create traditions and memories for your enjoyment, and to share with family and friends. This column is a place for you to share your holiday memories and traditions with the community.

Some holiday trivia

As a bonus I include some holiday trivia of times gone by.

One of my favorite Christmas traditions occurred in the 1950s. I remember, in fact the thing I wanted was a "Betsy" doll. Baby Boomers will remember her.

The drunk water from her baby and then she needed a change. I told everyone who would listen, parents, grandparents and aunts and uncles that I had that doll.

Isn't it surprised to receive a gift in triplicate? "Betsy" was tiny, wow. I changed a lot of tiny diapers that holiday season.

Berkeley Association of Realtors 2002 President, Miriam Ng

"In Berkeley we used to enjoy the community tree lighting ceremony and hayrides. The hayrides stopped in front of the Post Office, so the children could drop off their letters to Santa. As a member of the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, I volunteered to be a Santa's Helper and answer letters to Santa. It was a community activity that I remember fondly."

Nabisco made animal crackers with strings attached, so they could be hung on the Christmas tree as ornaments.

George Johnson, 2002 President of the Women's Council of Realtors East Bay Chapter

"I remember one Christmas, when I was a little boy, all I wanted and wished for was a snow sled. I was so anxious, I decided to do some snooping around. There it was. In the back of a closet. My sled. Now I had two problems. I'd ruined my Christmas surprise and to my dismay, there was no snow. Not one flake."

I went to sleep on Christmas Eve disappointed. When I woke up on Christmas morning, I couldn't believe it. Not only was there a sled under the tree for

me, there had been a snow-storm overnight while I slept. I'll never forget my excitement."

Long before Santa's pants and jacket turned red, he wore a full-length robe and almost any color was acceptable.

Oakland Association of Realtors 2002 President, Evelyn Walker

"One of my favorite Christmas memories concerns my son, when he was little. One Christmas Eve he announced he did not want to leave out the traditional, ordinary cookies and milk for Santa. This year he would set out carrots, celery and lettuce for the reindeer. I didn't have a problem with that, but it wasn't nearly as enjoyable for my husband to eat up the evidence."

Stringing popcorn garlands to hang on the tree is an old tradition. Unambitious Victorian Era women purchased red and green popcorn garlands from less affluent women who needed extra money.

Hadi Monsef, Alameda Association of Realtors 2002 President

"I first came to this country in 1956. I was delighted with the many holiday traditions and festivities here. Every country has its

See REID, Page B4



BOBBIE REID
Credit Worthy

Happy Holidays

Bobbie Reid



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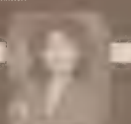
Evelyn Kennedy has been awarded the Senior Real Estate Specialist (SRES) designation. She has demonstrated that she has the knowledge and expertise required to assist seniors to make wise decisions about selling the family home, buying rental property or managing capital gains and other tax implications or owning real estate.

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I wish you all the joy and happiness of the holiday season with good health, peace and prosperity in 2002.

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*Wishing You a
Wonderful Holiday Season
Shared with
Family and Friends*

D.J. Grubb

John Karnay

Donald Grubb Sr.

A story to cozy up with on a winter's night

Return to #265 in a series of true experiences in real estate from December 1998

Once I read a book about a woman snowbound all alone in a cabin in Alaska. She and her husband had made their annual trip to do fishing. They'd planned to leave for home as they always did before the weather got bad but, worse luck, they'd been caught by an early snow and an avalanche.

Buried by snow but otherwise unhurt, the poor woman had struggled out, had searched and called in vain for her husband, and managed to reach their cabin. Fortunately, they had stored some dry firewood there, as well as various canned goods and, although she was frightened and cold, she was grateful for her life.

It happened that the woman was pregnant. Yes, the baby was due before long and would be born while she was there alone in the cabin — unless she could get out. Right away, before more snow arrived, she made a break for it. She bound herself up in layers of clothes and made her way to the boat shed and her husband had anchored nearby.

She got the engine started but it died. When she saw another boat in the distance, she fired flares but no one came. Finally, exhausted, she began the trek back to the cabin, moving heavily, falling frequently, and on one of the falls, she broke her arm.

Back at the cabin, she thawed out by the fire, slept fitfully, and upon awakening, looked about for materials to set her broken bone. Ah, the cardboard tube from a roll of waxed paper, slit down the center and wrapped with a dish towel would do. With her good arm, she stoked the fire, prepared a meager meal, and contemplated her situation.

The wind howled; the snow swirled and mounded higher. For weeks and weeks the woman watched her firewood supply dwindle knowing that there would be no more. She parceled out the wood carefully, staying in bed much of the time. She talked to herself and occasionally sang, sewed garments for the baby, and wrote long passages in her journal. The winter went on.

During the time that I was reading this book, I was living by myself in a small apartment in an old house. As the story progressed, my little place and I became those in the story. We were cold and dark. As I read, I gathered blankets

around me. I stared out my windows at the "snow" that was "falling" there.

I didn't have a fireplace or I would have commenced chopping wood and stacking it tidily. Instead, I refinished wood. With rags and stain, I'd spend a time covering over dents and scrapes in the finish of the old beams and wood trim in my "cabin" before picking up the book again. It was soothing work; I was making things better.

The baby came and the woman managed and they were fine. Then, just as the woman and I were becoming accustomed to our plight, it ended. There was a pounding on the woman's cabin door, so startling, so unexpected that it almost scared us both to death.

Standing outside the door in the snow was an Indian. He had been astonished to see smoke from her chimney and had come to see who was there.

It turned out that the woman's husband had been wintering over with the Indian not far from the cabin. He wasn't dead after all. This is all I can remember now about the ending. I suppose they got in their boat and went home as soon as they could.

My bones still chilly, I returned the book to the library, and gradually went back to my life. A year or so later I bought a house with a fireplace. I ordered firewood delivered which I stacked conveniently outside my front door, and I built crackling fires in my fireplace most every night.

I had plenty of firewood but I found myself bringing home every scrap of wood I could find. I'd be driving down a street on a bright day, for instance, warmth by fire far from my mind, then suddenly spy a pile of wood scraps at a construction site. Before I knew it, I was out of the car asking if I could have any of the wood for myself.

This must have been when I remembered the Alaska snow book which I determined to find again. I knew the title and author then (I don't anymore), but a search revealed that the library no longer had it, it was out of print, and I couldn't locate it at a used book store.

Too bad, I guess, but its absence was what got me started collecting other books about isolated living.

I have half a dozen or so good ones now, most of them stories of people who by choice went to the snowy back woods of somewhere usually, they said, for the quiet and to look at deer, bears and birds.



TARPOFF AND TALBERT
True Experiences

As I put my groceries away, the extra boxes of instant oatmeal and super-moist chocolate cake mix, as I fill the containers near my fireplace with a mix of logs and kindling, I think about being warm and prepared and comfortable.

I have no desire to follow these people to desolation, and in fact, I find their descriptions of mountains, trees, snow and wildlife rather dull. But in each of these books is something irresistible to me: a list of supplies.

As the back-to-the-wooders prepare for exile, each draws up a list of necessities: rice and flour, plastic tarps, tick spray, fishing line. More fascinating though is the list of comforts — items that, while not a matter of sustenance or safety, would be sorely missed.

It is these that I love to ponder. If I were out there in the snow and dark, what would I be sorry I left behind?

As I put my groceries away, the extra boxes of instant oatmeal and super-moist chocolate cake mix, as I fill the containers near my fireplace with a mix of logs and kindling, I think about being warm and prepared and comfortable.

If I were going to a lonely cabin, I'd be sure to take instant cocoa, canned chicken and rice soup, and my dictionary.

Anet Tarpo and Pat Talbert are licensed real estate agents who specialize in single family houses. They also offer hourly real estate consulting and coaching. They can be reached by e-mail at patanet@imi.net or by phone at 510-653-2050.

Affordability pushes first-timers

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS
Despite declining interest rates, affordability concerns pushed the percentage of first-time homebuyers down to 35.6 percent this year from 39 percent a year ago, according to the California Association of Realtors 2001 California Housing Finance Survey (HFS).

"The percentage of first-time homebuyers has been trending down since 1995, when a little more than half of all homes were purchased by first-time buyers," said C.A.R. President Robert Bailey. "While affordability has improved somewhat in recent months, the lack of af-

fordable, entry-level housing in most areas of the state is at a critical juncture for California." About one-third of California households can afford to purchase a median-priced home, compared to about 60 percent for the nation as a whole, according to C.A.R. research.

While two-thirds of all homebuyers earned \$70,000 or more in 2001, compared to 57.3 percent last year, the median income of first-time buyers remained unchanged for the third year in a row at \$60,000, according to the report.

The survey, a detailed housing market study produced an-

nually by C.A.R., also noted that the median price of a home in California

was \$280,000 in 2001, up from \$265,000 in 2000. The report also noted that the median price of a home in California was 10 percent higher than the national median price of \$250,000.

The report also noted that the median price of a home in California was 10 percent higher than the national median price of \$250,000.

Reid

FROM PAGE B3

own traditions. The wonderful thing is that people here are allowed to express those traditions. The freedoms here are like a gift from God."

Holiday cards were sent from year to year. They were used to make tree ornaments or the pictures were cut out and pressed into cookie dough and then baked.

John Holmgren, 2001 President, Oakland Association of Realtors

"My wife and I started our own Christmas tradition. Each year, in December, we take our children to San Francisco. We walk the Union Square area to see the lights and the decorated shop windows.

"The highlight of the trip, no matter how old our children, will always be a visit to FAO Schwartz, that wonderful toy store. After all, we're all kids at heart.

"We finish the day with dinner at the St. Francis Hotel and some years we attend 'The Nutcracker.' It's a busy day, but it makes for great memories."

Long before aluminum or plastic holiday trees, innovation ruled. A dead tree was stripped of its needles and cotton was glued to the branches for a flocking effect. Or instead of cotton, a very painstaking process was used to apply small feathers to create a look of tree needles.

Ann Bracci, 2001 President of the Alameda Association of Realtors

"A few years ago, we started our own tradition. My husband, my niece

and I travel early in December to the town of Columbia, near Sonora. We stay at the City Hotel and become a part of that city's 'Miner's Christmas Feast.'

Everyone dresses in costume and participates in a reenactment of an 1800s Christmas past. We have fun and truly feel the holiday spirit."

An old German tradition is the hiding of the "pickle" ornament. The ornaments come in a variety of sizes from gherkin to dill. Someone hides the ornament in the tree. Everyone looks for the ornament and the finder receives a present. The finder becomes next year's ornament hider.

Berkeley Association of Realtors 2001 President, Steve Yoshimura

"New Year's Day is a significant holiday with the Japanese. It is a meaningful tradition to spend the day with family and friends. It is important to start the New Year out right."

"Everywhere you visit, there are feasts of traditional Japanese food. People go all out and have fun trying to outdo each other. But the real fun is spending the day with those closest to you."

Theme trees used to be popular. The theme could be angels or small dolls or even family portraits to produce a true "family tree"

Denise Smith, Women's Council of Realtors East Bay Chapter 2001 President

"A holiday tradition, at least in Kindergarten classrooms across the country is the red and green con-

struction paper of a circle and the chain garland hanging on the tree and the walls.

It must have taken hours to cut all those stars and have them to survive a room full of kids and all that paper.

Not all cuts were stocking stuffers. Some were under the tree and some were in the stockings. I offered, so loaded with what we call healthy trees (orange, walnuts were frequently the colorful ones).

I started my own family while my children were young. Christmas Day was rushed. After the children's gifts from Santa got dressed and visited two sets of grandparents.

There was too every stop. I wanted meaningful moments. I set a festive, relaxing room and prepared breakfast.

On each plate sat a wrapped gift. Each of them a book. Inside I wrote a note and dated it. My kids the books and I have a story.

If we all could have a wish I believe I would like to have a happy holiday. For other comments, I can be reached at 441-7190.

Homebuyer help online

Buying a home is one of the biggest decisions — both financially and emotionally — you will make in your lifetime.

If you're a first-time buyer, you're probably thrilled about making the jump from apartment renting to owning your own house.

While you're excited, however, you also may be a bit overwhelmed by the procedures involved. Relocating or move-up buyers have the advantage of past experience, but still might need a refresher course on the intricacies of the process.

The buying process involves several steps, from finding a Realtor to making an offer to closing the deal. Whether you're a first-time or experienced buyer, you'll find an array of information at the California Association of Realtors' Web site that will assist you on your way to realizing your goal of homeownership.

To learn more log onto the Web site at car.org/consumer-info/buy/index.html.

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Please recycle this newspaper.

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B 7272 Buckingham 6972 Buckingham 7101 Buckingham 0 Buckingham 132 Behrens 7164 Buckingham 7272 Buckingham 6972 Buckingham 7101 Buckingham 3522 Buena Vista 1311 Bonita
C 3012 California 531 Chalk 243 Cherry wood 392 Convent Road 545 Convent Road 1229 Curtis 1107 Curtis 1701 Capistrano 1070 Capistrano 2570 Capistrano 0 Charming 1810 Central Ave.
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10000 Canelma Dr - \$163,000	1712 Julian Ct - \$425,000
10000 Canelma Dr - \$163,000	958 Leneve Pl - \$545,000
10000 Canelma Dr - \$163,000	5326 Potrero Av - \$290,000
EL CERRITO	
107 Renee Ct - \$357,500	
EL SOBRANTE	
107 Renee Ct - \$357,500	
EMERYVILLE	
96 Emery Bay Dr - \$275,000	
KENSINGTON	
227 Yale Av - \$170,000	
OAKLAND	
1715 104th Av - \$235,000	683 25th St - \$258,000
1001 105th Av - \$289,000	821 32nd St - \$347,000
1301 105th Av - \$200,000	2255 35th St - \$136,000
1201 107th St - \$190,000	1300 54th Av - \$235,000
2420 108th Av - \$290,000	2621 57th Av - \$234,000
2222 17th Av - \$359,000	1905 5th Av #8 - \$91,000
2643 22nd Av - \$157,000	1193 60th Av - \$234,000
683 25th St - \$258,000	1839 64th Av - \$195,500
821 32nd St - \$347,000	679 68th St - \$472,000
2255 35th St - \$136,000	354 72nd St - \$255,000
1300 54th Av - \$235,000	2712 73rd Av - \$315,000
2621 57th Av - \$234,000	2727 77th Av - \$100,000
1905 5th Av #8 - \$91,000	2654 78th Av - \$185,000
1193 60th Av - \$234,000	1029 82nd Av - \$250,000
1839 64th Av - \$195,500	2273 86th Av - \$175,000
679 68th St - \$472,000	4432 Arcadia Av - \$425,000
354 72nd St - \$255,000	4297 Atlas Av - \$500,000
2712 73rd Av - \$315,000	5630 Bacon Rd - \$873,000
2727 77th Av - \$100,000	565 Bellevue #802 - \$405,500
2654 78th Av - \$185,000	2069 Braemar Rd - \$615,000
1029 82nd Av - \$250,000	12001 Broadway Tr - \$715,000
2273 86th Av - \$175,000	
4432 Arcadia Av - \$425,000	
4297 Atlas Av - \$500,000	
5630 Bacon Rd - \$873,000	
565 Bellevue #802 - \$405,500	
2069 Braemar Rd - \$615,000	
12001 Broadway Tr - \$715,000	

Fixed rates up from last week

One-year ARM slips

from previous level

ALAMEDA - In Freddie Mac's Mortgage Market Survey, the one-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 7.09 percent, with an average cost of 0.6 point, (1 point equals 1 percent of the loan amount) for the week ending Dec. 14. This bellwether rate rose 25 basis points from the previous last week. A year ago, the one-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 7.42 percent.

The average for the 15-year fixed-rate mortgage this week is 7.42 percent, with an average cost of 0.6 point, up from last week when the one-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 6.30 percent. A year ago, the one-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 7.11 percent.

The Treasury-indexed adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) averaged 5.18 percent this week, with

an average 0.8 point, almost unchanged from last week's average of 5.21 percent. This time last year, the one-year ARM averaged 7.05 percent.

"Fixed-rates jumped this week, while the 1-year ARM edged down a little in response to the Fed's recent actions," said Frank Nothaft, Freddie Mac chief economist.

"But although long-term rates bumped up this week, mortgage rates today are in about the same range they were at the beginning of the year. They are still at historically low levels, which help keep housing more affordable for first-time homebuyers. This should ensure that the housing sector remains vibrant going into the new year."

"Although the timing of the economic recovery may be uncertain, housing will continue to be an important contributor to the turnaround that is expected next year."

PIEDMONT

100 Dudley Av - \$950,000

Lois' real estate hints

You fall in love with a wonderful color: spring green, summer plum or burnished gold. It is you! For your purposes now, "Realtor beige" might be the color of choice. It's a good background for all furnishings, and allows buyers to envision how they would express their personalities. How they would make it their own. That's the way to sell.

Lois can be reached at the Grand Lake office of Prudential California Realty, 510-834-2010; fax 510-834-3841; voice mail 510-287-2521; e-mail Lois.Harris@PruWeb.com.



LOIS HARRIS
REALTOR

24 Monticello Av - \$577,500
230 Palm Dr - \$665,000
242 Palm Dr - \$672,000
1092 Park Ln - \$821,000

RICHMOND

657 12th St - \$102,500
408 21st St - \$305,000
981 32nd St - \$194,000
120 4th St - \$146,000
1035 Campbell St - \$240,000
3521 Center Av - \$235,000
5022 Esmond Av - \$260,000
5918 Kipling Dr - \$425,000
2881 McBryde Av - \$207,500
3130 McBryde Av - \$260,000
671 Mesa Wy - \$300,000
3318 Roosevelt Av - \$212,500
5647 San Jose Av - \$369,000
2120 Sand Dollar Dr - \$314,000
325 South 8th St - \$226,500
3525 Wall Av - \$205,000
5324 Woodgate Ct - \$410,000

SAN LEANDRO

1725 151st Av - \$268,000
1551 167th Av - \$279,000
2252 Avocet Ct - \$370,000
15652 Baypoint Av - \$489,000
1647 Beechwood Av - \$310,500
595 Bagier Av - \$340,000
633 Cascade Rd - \$275,000
16590 Cowell St - \$340,000
16626 Cowell St - \$418,000
14957 Endicott St - \$299,000
348 Estabrook #286 - \$260,000
364 Farrelly Dr - \$306,000
667 Garside Ct - \$220,000
1452 Graff Av - \$398,000
1592 Graff Av - \$615,000
15467 Heron Dr - \$390,000
15525 Hesperian #A - \$257,000
16636 Kildare Dr - \$397,000
1312 Linton St - \$315,000
868 Linwood Wy - \$330,000
1837 Lopez Dr - \$370,000
16973 Los Reyes Av - \$280,000
1191 Louise St - \$315,000
1121 Lucille St - \$275,000

2417 Marina Bl - \$340,000
379 Napoleon Ct - \$385,000
15005 Norton St - \$325,000
14977 Portofino Cr - \$395,000
14200 Rose Dr - \$284,000
520 Victoria Ct - \$340,000
1794 Vining Dr - \$347,000
2077 Washington #208 - \$160,000
2246 West Av 134th - \$299,000
1588 Willow Av - \$335,000

SAN LORENZO

16041 Bayberry Ln - \$420,000
959 Bevilacqua St - \$282,000
16381 Kent Av - \$350,000
16029 Penn Av - \$435,000
15933 Via Granada - \$235,000
1900 Via Natal - \$315,000
16106 Via Segundo - \$320,000

By the numbers

ALAMEDA

TOTAL SALES: 13
LOWEST PRICE: \$163,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$955,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$379,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$412,115

ALBANY

TOTAL SALES: 6
LOWEST PRICE: \$155,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$500,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$388,000

BURKELEY

TOTAL SALES: 21
LOWEST PRICE: \$105,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$1,010,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$535,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$504,214

EL CERRITO

TOTAL SALES: 4
LOWEST PRICE: \$290,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$545,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$416,875

EL SOBRANTE

TOTAL SALES: 1
PRICE: \$357,500

EMERYVILLE

TOTAL SALES: 1
PRICE: \$275,000

KENSINGTON

TOTAL SALES: 1
PRICE: \$170,000

OAKLAND

TOTAL SALES: 103
LOWEST PRICE: \$91,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$1,200,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$289,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$353,539

PIEDMONT

TOTAL SALES: 5
LOWEST PRICE: \$577,500
HIGHEST PRICE: \$950,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$672,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$737,100

RICHMOND

TOTAL SALES: 17
LOWEST PRICE: \$102,500
HIGHEST PRICE: \$425,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$240,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$259,529

SAN LEANDRO

TOTAL SALES: 34
LOWEST PRICE: \$160,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$615,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$332,838

SAN LORENZO

TOTAL SALES: 7
LOWEST PRICE: \$235,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$435,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$320,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$336,714

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36 Units	1230 Brookside Dr.	San Pablo	\$2,375,000	Sold!
9 Units	1313 M. L. King Blvd.	Berkeley	\$995,000	Sold!
6 Units	1802 Channing Way	Berkeley	\$749,000	Sold!

Dan Woodworth 974-7613

woodworth@securitypacific.com
Security Pacific Real Estate Services

Security Pacific
Real Estate Brokerage

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Happy Holidays

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Designed by Ratcliff
In prestigious Claremont Court, this home offers very spacious proportions with great charm! The property features 5 bedrooms, office, large family room, formal dining, 4.5 bath, level entry, & a fenced yard!

Bebe McRae x145 **\$1,100,000**

Close to Campus!
Stately Edwardian with beautiful original detail & built-ins! 5 bedrooms, 2 baths, den, formal dining, eat-in kitchen! Large attic room!

Bebe McRae x145 **\$750,000**

36 Roanoke Road
Remodeled Claremont home! Light & bright! Vaulted ceilings, large living/dining room opens to kitchen! 3BR/3BA, study, garage, decks, garden. Excellent condition!

Susie Schevill x144 **\$550,000**

542 Santa Barbara Office EXCLUSIVE
Very bright, updates & expanded brown shingle on one of North Berkeley's most sought after streets 5BR, 2+ BA, separate studio/office. Beautiful finished attic space. Lovely garden, fabulous views

Ruth Frassetto x147 **\$925,000**

54 Vincente Road • Views & Location
Rare three-pane view-land in fabulous location near the Claremont Hotel two parcels were merged to create this incredible 32,000 sq ft for mostly level, neighborhood of distinguished homes.

Faye Keogh x126 **\$1,650,000**

484 Vassar Avenue
Fabulous, Unobstructed Bay Views! Charming 3BR, 2BA with craftsman touches. Light filled, great floor plan for entertaining. Big yard & wonderful 2nd unit with separate access

Anne Van Dyke x137 **\$799,000**

596 Euclid Avenue • Pending
An elegant, charming home in a great location. This home features a detached 4 bedroom garage apartment, a large lot, and a beautiful garden.

Susie Schevill x144 **\$1,325,000**

WALNUT CREEK

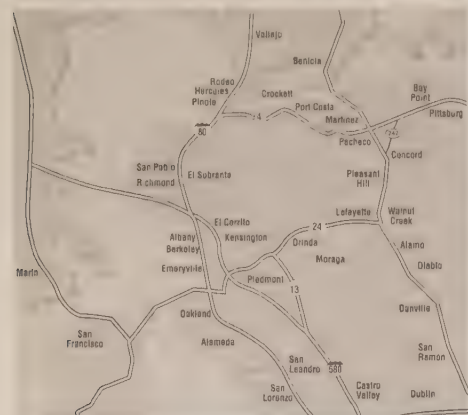
1582 First Avenue - Great Opportunity!
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Address & Realty	Size	Hours	Price
2512 Clay St. Open Sun, Main Inland Wendy Sando 510-531-2274 Kama & Associates	280/18A	2-4	\$388,000

OAKLAND

Address & Realty	Size	Hours	Price
15 Dorothy Pl. Montclarion OPEN SUNDAY Dorrie Fraida, 925-967-9062, Century 21 Heritage R.E.	486/68a	2-4	\$1,085,000
6079 Colton Montclarion OPEN SUNDAY Jody Duerck, 510-338-8900 x299, Century 21 Heritage Real Estate	3 + bd2ba	2-4:30	\$489,000
6145 Johnston Dr. Better Homes Jim Schubert	380/28A Sun	2-4:30	\$448,000
		(510) 339-4000	

RICHMOND

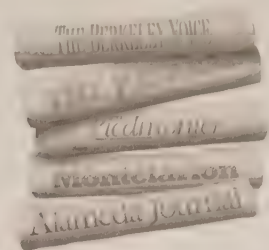
Address & Realty	Size	Hours	Price
1803 Cornflower Ct Cynthia Burke, Security Pacific, 510-662-8528	3bd/2.5	Sun 1-4	\$398,988

WALNUT CREEK

Address & Realty	Size	Hours	Price
270 North Civic Drive, #311 OPEN SATURDAY & SUNDAY Franko M. Iansen, 925-314-1522, Century 21 Heritage R.E.	2bd/2ba	12-3	\$394,500

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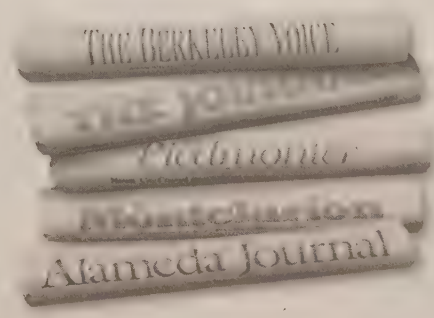
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Ridgeview II
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From the \$300,000's. Beautiful new community in highly acclaimed Jefferson School district. Close to the delta waterway for fishing and watersports. 4 spacious floorplans with 3-5 bedrooms, 2-5 baths and 1569-2943 sq. ft. KB home. 209-832-5020

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11 CA Springs
From the \$200,000's. Family oriented community located in
Scolano County. Close to shopping, restaurants and recreation.
1 Storys 1844-3100 sq ft. Open Mon-Thur 10-2 & 3-7. Fri 12-6
Sun 10-6 (707) 446-5590 www.xbhome.com

112 Canterfield
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113 Westgate Village
From the \$200,000's. Great location! Close to park, shops
and I-80. 1-2 Stones. 1384-2043 sq. ft. Open Mon-Thur 10-2
7 Fr 12-6 Sat-Sun 10-6 (707) 446-6357 www.kbhome.com

14 Estancia at Hiddenbrooke
Model Open! From the \$400,000's. Richmond American's new community of homes. Spacious floor plans 3-7 BR 2-4 1/2 Bath. 3,889 sq. ft. Featuring an Arnold Palmer-designed golf course with hillside views. A true private oasis. Open Mon 3-5 Tue-Sun 10-5

115 Castello at Hiddenbrooke
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116 The Heights at Hiddendebrooke
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two-story homes from 2585 to 3914 sq. ft. with large view lots at the Arnold Palmer Signature Golf Course. Open daily 10-5. Davidson Homes (707) 557-4100. www.HomesByDavidson.com

117 Hiddenbrooke
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from Amenities include an 18-hole golf course, beautiful club and 700 acres of open space www.visithiddenbrooks.com

118 The Knolls at Hiddenbrooke
From the \$300,000's • GRAND OPENING! Active adult community. Nestled in the Hiddenbrooks Valley at the Arnold Palmer designed Hiddenbrooks Golf Course master planned

community. Quaint homes, 3 plans up to 2,000-2,600 sq. ft., and bedrooms with dedicated dens and/or lofts and many lifestyle options available. Hwy 80 to N. Valjeo. Exit American Canyon Rd./Hiddenbrooke Pkwy, drive south towards Hiddenbrooke. Signs to The Knolls once in the Hiddenbrooke community. Call (707) 554-8550. Open daily 10-5 PM. R.W. Hertel & Sons

120 Milano
From low \$400,000's. Extraordinary residences with 2, 3, 135 sq ft., up to 6 BR + 2-car garages. Open Mon 1-6, Tue 1-6, 3565 Headwater Dr 707-557-3879, Warrington Homes, California

From now \$300,000's. Models Open! 1 & 2 story townhomes with designs up to 2149 sq ft. European-style with views. 1-8 Columbus Pkwy. right on Admiral Callaghan Pkwy. left on Plaza. Mandarch Developments. Open daily 10-6. 707-644-2210. www.baratownhomes.com

NOW AVAILABLE! From \$365,000 The Village is now open for sales. As the only gated community in Hiddenbrooke, this Thomas Kinkadee inspired community features four plans reminiscent of 1920's architecture with up to 2,637 sq. ft. Some of these homes are situated alongside the scenic Arnold Palmer golf course daily 10-5. For info, call (707) 558-8315
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122 Westchester at Hiddenbrooke
From the mid \$500,000's. Luxury 3 to 6 bedroom homes on the golf course. Built by Sonoma County's Builder of the Year. Christopher Homes 707-552-1010
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WALNUT CREEK

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125 Grand Oak Estates
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Season's Greetings
Best Wishes for a Wonderful 2002



Claire Cunningham
(510) 287-9065

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Lest long Winter Nights seem gloomy, consider this uplifting fact: The extra hours are quite roomy for fireside toasts and all of that.



Kelly Deal
(510) 484-4300

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REALTORS

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for a Warm and Wonderful New Year!!!

Laurel Strand



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Wishing you Peace and Joy!



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Happy Holidays!
I'll see you in 2002!



Logene Butler, Realtor
(510) 701-4344
logeneb@aol.com

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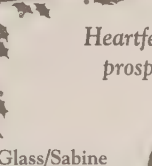
Thanks for a great year. Wishing everyone old fashion joys, happy memories and all of the joys of the season.



Barbara Hopper
(510) 845-0211

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Heartfelt thanks and continued prosperity to all our clients



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May all of your holiday dreams and wishes come true!



Katy Wong
(510) 748-0313
cell (510) 919-6912

LUCKY HOMES REALTY & INVESTMENT INC

Happy Holidays!
I look forward to working with you in 2002.



Cindy Fleming
(510) 287-9389
(510) 428-0900

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Merry Christmas and a Wonderful New Year to my clients



Madalyn Mitchell
(510) 986-9517

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Wishing you & your family a happy & healthy holiday season.



Kim Habu


Best Wishes for a Joyous New Year!



Susie Schevill

TEMPLETON LEVERETTE COMPANY
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Peace & Prosperity to all for 2002.



Ron Egberman

TEMPLETON LEVERETTE COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley 94705 • (510) 652-2133

Best Wishes for a joyous season & Peace on Earth!



Tricia Swift

TEMPLETON LEVERETTE COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley 94705 • (510) 652-2133

Most of All...
Peace in 2002



Nancy Hinkley
Realtor
Office: (510) 428-0900
Voice Mail: (510) 433-2842

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Happiness & Peace in the New Year



Helene Barkin

TEMPLETON LEVERETTE COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley 94705 • (510) 652-2133

Joy in Two Two!



Bebe McRae

TEMPLETON LEVERETTE COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley 94705 • (510) 652-2133

342 Highland Ave. • Piedmont

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Peace & Harmony in 2002.



Marlene Leverette

TEMPLETON LEVERETTE COMPANY
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Season's Greetings
from Hills Newspapers

The Warmest Holiday Wishes

FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE COMMUNITY



Wishing you a New Year
of Joy, Hope and
Renewed Purpose!

PACIFIC UNION

Donna Costella
(510) 339-6460 ext. 355



Season's Greetings

Sending you and yours
all the best - serenity,
love, health and
happiness!

PACIFIC UNION

Joan E. Hause
(510) 339-6460 ext. 358



To my family, clients and friends

Thank you for your support
throughout the year.

Have A Joyous Holiday Season!

RICHARDSON
REAL ESTATE SERVICES

Georgia Richardson
(510) 569-3499



Happy Holidays &
Warm Wishes this
New Year

RE/MAX

Jackie Carter
(510) 632-2539



Wishing You Peace
and Happiness for
the New Year!

PACIFIC UNION

Leslie Avant
(510) 339-6460 ext. 341



Best Wishes to You
for Peace & Joy in
the New Year!

PACIFIC UNION

Leslie Gordon
(510) 339-6460 ext. 327



Best Wishes
for a Happy &
Healthy New Year!

PACIFIC UNION

Lori Arazi
(510) 339-6460 ext. 330



May your home be
filled with the Spirit
of Peace and Love!

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Dee Knowland
(510) 339-6460 ext. 318



Joy & Fullfillment
in
2002!

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Kathleen Callahan
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Wishing You Peace
On Earth
In The New Year!

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Michelle Vasey
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Happy Holidays

and a Healthy
New Year!

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Wendy Gardner
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Wishing You Peace
and Happiness for
the New Year!

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Ann Nichols
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Wishing you a peaceful holiday
season and a very Happy New Year
from everyone at Marvin Gardens.

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Denyse Biagi	Terri Huang	Dee Plunkett
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Marion Henon	Mary Lou Loomis	Nic Tang
Todd Hodson	Linda Mayeda	Rosita Thornton
	Joan Underwood	

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Wishing You Joy
In Your Home
And Peace In
The New Year

PACIFIC UNION

Gini Erck
(510) 339-6460 ext. 339



Wishing You
Health, Happiness,
and a Prosperous
New Year!

PACIFIC UNION

Ashley O'Neill
(510) 339-6460 ext. 368



Happy Holidays

Warm Wishes to Your Family from
Ours This Holiday Season

Grazina Bivins
(510) 451-8007



Happy Holidays

and my best to you -
throughout this
New Year!

PACIFIC UNION

Jack McPhail
(510) 339-6460 ext. 300



Wishing You Peace
This Holiday Season
with Health, Happiness
and Prosperity in the
New Year!

PACIFIC UNION

Terri Carlisle
(510) 339-6460 ext. 305

*Have a Magical
Holiday!*

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MARK WILSON

A RECENTLY RESTORED ITALIANATE HOUSE, now a hotel.

Wilson

FROM PAGE B2

university professor of literature) and her stepfather. This house was built in 1902, and retains its original, ornately carved oak front door. The living quarters are on the second floor, a common feature of homes in the Habana Centro district. The second story has a spacious living room with a balcony overlooking the street, a formal dining room, a kitchen, a large bathroom, and a total of five bedrooms.

The ceilings in this house are nearly fourteen feet high, and there are handsome cast iron Corinthian pilasters lining the doorways between the main rooms. The balcony has an intricate wrought iron railing, a classic feature of Victorian- and Edwardian-era homes throughout Cuba.

Yohana's family is in the process of restoring their house, but it is a slow and painstaking process. They have done much of the work themselves, such as painting and plaster repairs. For the more specialized tasks, such as electrical work

and carpentry, they have had to hire skilled laborers, of whom there is a real shortage in Havana now due to all of the restoration work going on in the city.

One of the jobs that still needs to be completed is the replacement of the glass panels in the old fanlight windows that grace the living room wall above the balcony.

The cost of this work including materials, if they pay for all the labor, will be around \$500. While this sum is a fraction of what it would cost in the US, it is a small fortune in Cuba, where the average professor's salary is around \$50 a month.

In part three of this series, I will discuss some of the joint venture restoration projects of historic buildings in Havana. I will also describe what has been learned from the various sister city relationships between various Cuban and Bay Area communities.

Mark A. Wilson is a Realtor and architectural historian who works at Prudential California Realty's Albany office. He can be reached at 510-273-9383. Visit him at www.topbroker.com/wilson.

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SPORTS

• Friday, December 21, 2001 •

Section C

Roundup Broncos pounce on Panthers; Gauchos lose [C2]

Arts 'Lord' is a great film [C3]

Winter soccer: a separate identity



MIKE MCGREEHAN
Between the Lines

ally more physical than it is in the fall. And girls soccer in spring is less about run-and-chase than that of winter. Surely, weather and field conditions play a great role. Artistry and elegance suffer on wet, sloppy fields. Players struggle to get anything done and games become less interesting for the fans.

Winter soccer deserves to go the way of the Edsel, Corvair and Pet Rock. Most high school fields aren't meant to take the abuse of getting trampled upon after heavy rainstorms. But we've discussed the ills of winter soccer in this space before, so let's move on.

Soccer in this country no doubt lacks the dyed-in-the-wool passion found in other

parts of the world. But soccer here also is a microcosm of soccer worldwide, its diversity of styles reflecting the diversity of the people who play it as well as the various conditions under which it is played.

"Climate could have (had an influence) on soccer many, many years ago," says Moreau Catholic High School boys coach Kevin Ogley, a native of England, where his father once played professionally and still coaches. "In colder countries, the game is more about pace and physical fitness. In hotter climates, it's slower and more about skill."

Of course, certain types of play become a habit, even when the weather heats up in a normally cold area or cools down in a normally warm one.

"The difference is huge," Ogley says. "British and Northern European is more physical, has more physical demands, while South American and Southern European soccer is more skills-based. The game is slower and more technical."

Locally, teams that play in

the fall or spring tend to reflect a South American or Southern European style, styles played best on dry fields. Boys teams from the Oakland Athletic League and Bay Counties League East fit this mold well. Winter teams, such as Bishop O'Dowd and Moreau Catholic of the Hayward Area Athletic League, tend to fall more in the British mold.

But reasons for increased physical play, some argue, go far beyond climate and field condition. Take the O'Dowd-Moreau Catholic boys match of Dec. 7 as an example.

"Between Moreau and O'Dowd there really is a 'derby' atmosphere; both are private schools and both compete in the NCS 2A (division)," O'Dowd coach Pete Belanger says. "Many of the players play on the same club teams and have been coached by the same coaches. The parents know one another, etc. There is a lot of pride on the line here."

"I don't think that the inten-

See MCGREEHAN, Page C2



WINTER SOCCER? Expect to get down and dirty

New gym, new coach, new hopes

Winless last year, Cougars girls are 4-3

By Dean Rosener
CORRESPONDENT

On Dec. 22 orphans of the storm looking in 4-3 sunshine now. Without a gym, without a win last year, the Albany High girls' basketball team has battled back to respectability this year.

Prep girls' basketball	
Albany	59
Richmond	23

Albany's 5-3 Jodi Nagakura is a player with a high-arching shot that almost seems to come from the ceiling, while fellow sophomore Stephanie Wissler is a powerful 5-7 slasher who shoots off-balance line drives.

The youthful pair dominated the first period against Richmond, Wissler scoring seven points and Nagakura six as the Cougars forged a 21-12 lead. Albany kept expanding the gap: 28-11 at the half and 41-19 after three quarters.

Albany's defensive intensity kept Richmond to just 11 points the last 24 minutes, strugling in the game. Struggling Richmond is now 0-5.

Wissler credits new coach

assistant Tim Dorsey for the team's turnaround.

"Last year, we thought about how much less we could lose by," Wissler said. "This year, we're so much more confident. We know we can go out and win games, unlike last season when we were zero and, like, 100."

"The new coaches are knowledgeable and committed, very serious about shaking up the program."

Actually, this season is the second go-around for Arnold, who coached the Cougars basketball team for nine years in the 1980s before switching to softball. Currently a physical education teacher at Ocean View Elementary School, Arnold found that she missed hoops.

"I just love the challenge this year's team presents," she said. "I look at this task as promising, rather than daunting. We can only get better."

Arnold's major concern is that 5-11 junior Maria Martinez must carry so much of the load at center, with everyone else on the team at least four inches shorter.

"If Maria gets into foul trouble," Arnold said. "We're all in trouble."

The intense Martinez, a high honor-roll student, briefly scuffled with Richmond's Terri Brown in third period. Handshakes ensued, but both players were ejected.

Picking up the Albany slack were two gritty 5-7 forwards who outgrew the taller Oiler players. Elizabeth Ali scored 14 points (second on the team behind Nagakura's 16), while Daniella Arellano came off the bench to add eight.

The Cougars believe they have another new weapon — their beautiful new gym.

"It's bright, it's light, it makes us want to defend our home court," Dorsey said.

Albany had to play its home



STEVE MASLAN/STAFF

IN A FOUL MOOD, Albany's Jodi Nagakura collided with Richmond's Tamara Daniels during their Dec. 18 contest in Albany. Playing in their new gymnasium, the Cougars routed the Oilers 59-23 to improve to 4-3.

games last year at Albany Middle School, and journeyed all the way up to Alameda Point to practice.

But Wissler saw one bright spot in the travel travails.

"Those long trips brought us closer together," she said.

Those sojourns didn't seem to

hurt Wissler academically. Like Martinez, she is a high honor roll student.

Also creating camaraderie is the fact that everyone on the nine-player team is in the rotation. Stella Lau, just a sopho-

See DREAM, Page C2

'Jackets taking rivals to the mat

SPECIAL TO HILLS NEWSPAPERS

Berkeley High School promises to have a young, but eager and exciting team, this winter. The Yellow Jackets began the season with 46 wrestlers, 35 of whom come to practice regularly. Many are new to the program, including 24 freshmen and 14 sophomores.

On Dec. 8, the Yellow Jackets took 17

wrestlers (nine freshmen, eight sophomores) — all boys — to the Foothill High School Frosh-Soph Tournament in Pleasanton. At day's end, eight of the Berkeley wrestlers had medaled.

Freshman Daniel Burley and sophomore Carlo Cornejo each took first in his class. Freshman Jonah Tabb and sophomore Antal Polony each grabbed second-place honors. Freshmen Stephan Gordon-Richardson and David Vargas, along with sophomores Johnny Boddy and Nick Riley, enjoyed third-place finishes.

Berkeley girls went to the 40-team Mid-Peninsula Classic Junior Varsity Tournament in Burlingame a day earlier.

Berkeley girls tournament coach Hugh Johnson thought he had his team entered in a tournament that used pooled weights. Instead, the Mid-Peninsula employed the 14 weight classes recognized by the California Interscholastic Federation.

To their credit, the girls wres-

tled anyway against much stronger juniors and seniors. Christie Ravera was superb in terms of technique. Ravera had one exciting match in particular, where the score was knotted at 5-5 in the third period. But Ravera got caught in a head-and-arm, couldn't get out of it, and so lost the match. But she wasn't outwrestled.

Three years of hard work appear to be paying off for Sarah Rivera, who took sixth place in her bracket of 16 wrestlers. Coach Johnson said Rivera showed exceptional technique and won a lot of respect — even in the matches she lost.

Earlier action

On Dec. 1, 28 Yellow Jackets wrestlers competed in the Dave Liddell Invitational at Vallejo High. Of those, 15 — or 53.5 percent — advanced to the championship or consolation finals of their divisions.

Among the girls, Lily Derman and Monique Le each took second place in her four-wrestler round robin. Sarah Rivera was third in her eight-wrestler bracket.

Kris Austin and Dyamen Bey, were second and third, respectively, in a boys junior varsity eight-wrestler bracket.

Berkeley also had 10 frosh-soph wrestlers place in their brackets of eight. Marlon Boddy, Carlo Cornejo and Nic Riley each captured first place in his bracket. Luc Maheu and Stephan Gordon-Richardson each finished second. Antal Polony and Alfonso Thomas both took third. Sam Hammer, Graham Heimler and Jarrett Griffith all enjoyed fourth-place finishes.

See WRESTLING, Page C2

Jackets find Valley unpleasant

Vikings outshoot top-ranked Yellowjackets on home court

By Curtis Elliott
CORRESPONDENT

When a team is ranked No. 1 in the Bay Area you expect to see them play very good basketball. In this case, the great basketball wasn't played by the No. 1-ranked Berkeley Yellow Jacket. Instead it was their opponents, the Pleasant Valley Vikings, who defeated the Yellow

Jackets, 72-61. Playing at Donohue Gymnasium, Viking Lauren Himmelsbach shot the lights out, scoring 31 points and making an amazing 16 of 19 free throws. The entire Pleasant Valley team put on a shooting clinic as they shot 80 percent from the charity stripe.

Anna Griffith added 18 points and teammates Erin Gonzalez (11) and Jenny Ferguson (10) also scored in double figures. Making matters worse was that

Berkeley was outrebounded 29-20.

"They played very consistent basketball," Berkeley coach Gene Nakamura said. As for their No. 1 ranking in the Contra Costa Times poll. "To me it's where you are at the end of the season. I could care less where we're ranked (now)."

Still, in the early going, the Yellow Jackets (4-3) forced four early turnovers and trailed just 13-10 after one quarter of play. Berkeley's Angelita Hutton had buried a 3-pointer to temporarily tie it at 10.

Sabrina Keys began to come to life in the second quarter for Berkeley. On one play she beat a

triple team for an easy lay-up. She scored another against a double-team and another triple-team bucket. She was the offense for the Yellow Jackets in the quarter.

"I was getting triple-teamed in the post," Keys said. "I'd kick it back out and we tried to shoot 3s. We mainly go inside-outside."

Incredibly, Keys seemed to thrive under the competition of additional bodies, as she led Berkeley with 16 hard-fought points. Keys also led the team with seven boards. No other Yellow Jacket cleared the glass more than once in the first half.

See JACKETS, Page C2



NAM TON/STAFF

UNDER PRESSURE, Berkeley's Sabrina Keys looked to the hoop for help. Playing Pleasant Valley in Berkeley on Dec. 14, the Yellow Jackets lost to the Vikings 72-61.

Links to the public

WHEN I FIRST began writing sports for a newspaper in 1989, it was under the watchful eye of a kindly old man who had a wealth of experience. Jack Clark had been the sports editor in Alameda for 62 years, and I was his protégé.

Jack loved to talk about Alameda sports ... and boxing. He would constantly remind me that Joe Louis had a weakness — the left hook. But Clark's legacy involved a golf course.

In the late 1960s the city of Alameda considered selling the land where the South course was located. Too many problems, and, to be honest, the course looked like a piece of junk. Jack knew that speculators were waiting to develop that land, to build hotels and make the place a commercial development, neon signs and all. He could not stand the thought.

Jack wrote a series of articles about the importance of keeping that South course and redeveloping it.

He was not alone in the fight. Chuck Corica, Lil Arnerich and his wife, Norma, Harold Tibaldi and others fought to keep that golf course. Eventually, Corica was elected mayor on that platform. A golf commission was re-established. The course was saved and redesigned by architect Robert Muir Graves.

In 1977 the new South course opened. And it began making money. Soon, the municipal courses in Alameda became the most popular and profitable public courses in the land. At one time attendance was near 300,000, a previously unheard-of figure. The courses remain profitable to this day. Jack was right.

The course was eventually named for Clark. And the whole Alameda complex was named for Corica.

I mention all of the above because now I find myself, however ironic it may be, in the same position Clark found himself in back in the sixties.

Naval Air Station Alameda closed. The proposed center-piece to develop that land is a golf course.

The main reason a golf



RON SALSIG
Range Rat

course fits into the development of this land is the requirement that much of the adjoining land be a fish and wildlife refuge, specifically for the least tern. If any tall structures — even trees — were to rest on the adjoining land, predators like hawks or owls could scope on top and prey on those least terns.

Fortunately, there is a type of golf course that fits — a links golf course. This is the kind of course found in Britain, an entirely different sort of course than we are used to in America.

A links course is treeless. It is built on land next to the sea or an estuary, like St. Andrews in Scotland. This is windy land. Because of that wind, a links course is hard and fast so the ball can roll.

A typical American course has hazards that must be flown, like water. A typical links course has an array of hazards like bunkers or burns that the ball can roll into, unseen from the golfer's eye.

American golf is an aerial battle. Links golf is more like playing a pinball machine. The point is to navigate the roll of the ball safely through the hazards.

The land at Alameda Point is perfect for a links golf course — right next to the water with a lot of wind.

But very few architects can design a links course. Oh, they say they can. I remember the first time I saw PGA West in Palm Springs. This was supposed to be the first links golf course in America. But there was no seawater, and hardly any wind. And too many lakes that had to be flown. This was no links course.

One man who can design a links course is Kyle Phillips. He was commissioned to do the last links course in Scotland, the Kingsbarns Links. Phillips, an American, had his big test

when the new Kingsbarns course, which opened this year, was added to the Dunhill Links Championship along with nearby St. Andrews.

The greatest players in the world raved about the new Kingsbarns Links. The course will again host the championship next year.

Phillips believes the land at Alameda Point is very similar to the Kingsbarns site. He was commissioned by the city of Alameda to design the course on the point, where the estuary meets the bay.

We could not have a better man for the job. And this is not just another golf course for Phillips. He has put his heart and soul into the project, as if the Alameda Point course might be his masterpiece.

The detractors say they only see wasteland where two runways currently cross. Phillips reminds us that the Kingsbarns site was quite similar when he first saw it. It was a training ground for WW II troops.

The charm of St. Andrews, the archetype of all links courses, is that it is a public golf course, on public land. The public is allowed to wander the land freely. Phillips is now talking with several public agencies, reminding them that St. Andrews has always had public access, and so will the Alameda Point course. There will be public trails throughout his design.

The draft environmental impact report for the new course is scheduled to be released around March. If all goes well, the course should be completed by 2005.

I sense Jack smiling. Links: Blake Yu of Alameda broke his ankle playing basketball shortly after Thanksgiving, but that did not stop the 13-year-old from finishing in eighth place at the Pasatiempo Invitational a week ago with an 83. He just put a big rubber boot on the cast to keep it dry ... Ki Shui Liao won the girls competition at Pasatiempo with a 71 ... The green fee increase for the Chuck Corica Golf Complex goes before city council on Jan. 2 and will take effect on Jan. 4.

Ron Salsig can be reached at rsalsig@pacbell.net

Jackets

FROM PAGE C1

Pleasant Valley's offense had terrific flow to it. They were scoring at will in the paint and from the free-throw line. Gonzalez sliced into the lane, making a left-handed basket to give the Vikings a 29-19 lead with less than four minutes to go in the half.

Himmelsbach buried a 3-pointer to make it 36-23, but then Danesha Moore countered that with a 3 for Berkeley, before Himmelsbach came back with a 2. Griffith made a buzzer beating shot to increase the gap to 40-28 at half-time. The Vikings scored 27 points in the period.

Berkeley came out trapping in the second half and opened up with a 5-2 spurt on a three-point play by Keys and an assist from Keys.

Natasha Bailey made three, 3-pointers in the third quarter for Berkeley. Her second one cut the deficit to 45-39 at the 2:10 mark. Meanwhile, Berkeley's defense had tightened up and the 'Jackets were no longer allowing Pleasant Valley free reign to the basket. Bailey tried to bury another 3-pointer but was blocked. She came back and made another for a 49-42 deficit, but Pleasant Valley's Griffith matched that.

Then it all started falling apart for Berkeley. Hutton was fouled on a 3-point attempt, but in a bizarre development a Berkeley assistant was called for a technical foul. After a long break, Hutton went to the free-throw line and missed two out of three. Himmelsbach made a free throw relating to the technical. Later, a long bomb by Himmelsbach concluded a 9-1 spurt by the Vikings to end the quarter up 58-43.

"We've got some freshman," Keys said. "We've got a lot to learn. We learned from this loss."

After this game it seemed that this is a team that is not jelling just yet.

"If you look at the first half, we were sort of like a headless



BERKELEY'S KALYCA SEABROOK prepared for an offensive play against Pleasant Valley.

team," said Nakamura. "Keys was our leader. It's hard to have a post player leading the team. Our perimeter people were not making good decisions."

Improvement was made in the fourth quarter by Berkeley, but by then it was a case of too little, too late. The 3-pointers were no longer falling and the Yellow Jackets barely shot 50 percent from the charity stripe.

Devane Hampton, a 6-foot-3 freshman, scored eight points in the fourth enroute to finishing with 13 on the night. Hutton and Bailey each scored 11 in the loss.

Gonzalez and Janelle Mantzel added eight boards each for Pleasant Valley.

Postgame

HOME SWEET HOME?: It's

Sale to save money. Many "new" Berkeley courses said. Berkeley's new course was a case of too little, too late. The 3-pointers were no longer falling and the Yellow Jackets barely shot 50 percent from the charity stripe. Devane Hampton, a 6-foot-3 freshman, scored eight points in the fourth enroute to finishing with 13 on the night. Hutton and Bailey each scored 11 in the loss. Gonzalez and Janelle Mantzel added eight boards each for Pleasant Valley. **Postgame** HOME SWEET HOME?: It's

PREP SPORTS ROUNDUP

Broncos pounce on Panthers; Gauchos lose

Yellowjacket girls edge Gauchos on soccer field

By Darcy Couch
STAFF WRITER

WALNUT CREEK — London McCurry stole the show in the first half for Northgate High School, pouring in 16 points to lead the Broncos to a 44-29 win over St. Mary's for the championship of the Walnut Creek Holiday Classic girls basketball tournament.

But it wasn't easy. The Panthers put up a wall in the paint in the first quarter, shutting down the Broncos for a 7-5 lead. Northgate eventually worked out a successful solution, however, and put the ball in McCurry's hands for nine of the Broncos' 17 points in the second quarter. The next step was to tighten up their defense in the second half.

"They came out and executed, you have to give them credit," St. Mary's associate coach Sean Dulan said of the Broncos. "We got a little frazzled. We just didn't execute our game the way we should."

Northgate's nine-point lead at half ballooned into a 16-point cushion by the end of the third quarter as St. Mary's was only able to put two points on the board.

The Panthers put together

their best quarter at the end, though it wasn't enough to eclipse the Broncos' still-strong play. Northgate was able to break through the St. Mary's press with no problem to help keep the Broncos in stride. Meghan Leary scored six of her seven points for St. Mary's in the final period, and Nateanah Fripp topped the Panthers' scoring with 10.

Tournament MVP McCurry led all players with 21 points. Andrea Denize punched in 10, and Melissa Jardin had eight for the Broncos.

Hogan 44, El Cerrito 39

VALLEJO — Marqueta Green posted a triple-double for El Cerrito but it was not enough in a 44-39 loss to Hogan-Vallejo in the consolation final of the Lady Bruin Classic.

Green had 12 points, 11 assists and 11 steals for the Gauchos (2-5) and landed a spot on the all-tournament team. Jordan McCormick added 10 points and 10 rebounds for El Cerrito.

Hogan's poor free-throw shooting helped keep the Gauchos in the game. The Spartans hit just 8 of 23 from the line.

Campolindo 67, El Cerrito 45

MORAGA — Shannon Farrell

scored 25 points and Bailey Phelps added 12 as Campolindo (3-4) marched to a 67-45 non-league win over El Cerrito. Melissa Stallworth scored 15 and Jenna Radosevich had 13 to lead the Gauchos (2-6).

Girls' soccer

Yellowjackets edge Gauchos

EL CERRITO — Berkeley remained undefeated in the Alameda Contra Costa Athletic League (3-0) with a 3-2 victory over El Cerrito.

Maura Fitzgerald, Hannah Grenfell and Annie Borton scored goals for the Yellow Jackets. Borton's goal gave Berkeley a 3-1 lead at the 48-minute mark, but El Cerrito (1-1-1 ACCAL) kept the score close with a goal by Melissa Mello two minutes later. Brittany Sims also scored for the Gauchos.

Sara Corrigan-Gibbs grabbed 12 saves for Berkeley, while El Cerrito goalkeeper Jenna Brace had eight saves.

Chace Bryson contributed to this article.

Dreams

FROM PAGE C1

more, starts at forward. Joining her in the rotation are fellow sophs Jessie Wallen and Juna Fleer and junior Katie Plambeck.

"We're going to make the playoffs," Dorsey predicted. To do so, it would take at least a sixth-place finish in the 10-team Bay Shore Athletic League. The

Cougars' next game is their BSAL opener on Wednesday, Jan. 2, at John Swett.

From oh-for-a-season to play-off hopes. What a difference a year makes in expectations.

Postgame

JV NEWS: Albany's junior varsity team, coached by Dorsey, defeated Richmond 38-35 to bring its record to 2-3.

Other highlights included first takedowns by Polony, Boddy, David Silber-Baker, Scott Rasmussen, Riley, Jonah Tabb, Maheu, Thomas, Morrie Pauline, Stephan Richardson, Mathison Ott, Austin, Rivera, Derman, Cornejo, Heimler, Eli Marienthal and Le.

Wrestling

FROM PAGE C1

Boddy, Cornejo and Riley went undefeated in the tournament. Hammer (13 seconds) and Rivera (15 seconds) recorded the fastest pins.

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Arts

'Lord of the Rings' is great

Tolkien's epic is adapted with breathtaking visuals, emotion

By Mary F. Pols
STAFF WRITER

PETER JACKSON'S "The Fellowship of the Ring," the first of three movies adapted from J.R.R. Tolkien's monumental epic "The Lord of the Rings," is a soulful, passionate giant of a movie, one that will live long past 2001.

It sweeps you up, enraptures you with its storytelling and leaves you rejoicing that there are filmmakers out there who have the guts to make a movie destined for vast commercial success that's also intelligent and ferociously heartfelt.

The ring in question, the ring that starts it all, was forged long ago in the fires of a hellish place called Mordor by Sauron, a dark lord. The ring embodies all his cruelty and cunning. Merely having it in your house is enough to eat away at your soul. Put it on and you become invisible to all but the forces of evil, who will be drawn to you like moths to a flame.

The ring was taken in battle from Sauron ages ago, shown in a prologue that practically steams with energy; and he, long thought to be dead or dormant and now reviving, needs it back in order to conquer Middle-earth. But for years the ring has been in the possession of a gentle hobbit named Bilbo Baggins (Ian Holm), who happened upon it years ago, in a mountain cavern, and knows nothing of its true power.

The story picks up as Bilbo is retiring, leaving his cozy home in the bucolic Shire and heading off into the wild, having bequeathed all of his possessions, including the ring, to his nephew, Frodo Baggins (Elijah Wood). Bilbo and Frodo have long been watched over by Gandalf (Ian McKellen), a wise and kindly wizard who has a deep appreciation for the hidden courage and talents of hobbits.

Gandalf discovers the truth about the ring and tells Frodo he must take the ring to Mordor and toss it in the fire it was forged in, the only way to destroy it. Frodo is terrified but dutifully sets out, with his loyal hobbit friends Samwise Gamgee (Sean Astin), Merry (Dominic Monaghan) and Pippin (Billy Boyd). Along the way, the Fellowship swells to nine, including Gandalf; two men, Aragorn (the outrageously manly Viggo Mortensen) and Boromir (Sean Bean); Glimi the dwarf (John Rhys-Davies); and an elf named Legolas (Orlando Bloom). Together they brave many dark moments, and when the story reaches its end, after nearly three



MOVIE REVIEW

- **WHAT:** "The Fellowship of the Ring"
- **STARRING:** Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Astin, Liv Tyler, Cate Blanchett
- **RATING:** PG-13 (for epic battle sequences and scary images)
- **RUNNING TIME:** 2 hours, 58 minutes
- **WHERE:** Opened Wednesday at area theaters
- **GRADE:** A

cinematic hours, they are still far from Mordor.

Jackson, a director who started his career with a series of over-the-top horror films and then won respect with his spooky, sensual "Heavenly Creatures," was the perfect choice to take on Tolkien. He clearly loves and respects the story, but he knew things had to be changed or the movie would have been six hours long and slow going. Those who complained that Christopher Columbus didn't lend his own imagination to J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" should be much happier with the way Jackson has breathed life into Tolkien (frankly, this movie makes "Harry" seem pleasant but pallid).

Most important, Jackson knows terror, knows how to

See LORD, Page C5



CLOCKWISE from top: In J.R.R. Tolkien's "Fellowship of the Ring," Hobbits band together on a quest to destroy a powerful, evil ring; Viggo Mortensen cuts a fine figure as the mysterious Aragorn; director Peter Jackson, known for his horror films, doesn't hold back in the portrayal of the Black Riders, who are chasing the Fellowship to capture the ring; Ian McKellen is eloquent as the kindly wizard Gandalf.

'Trojan War' takes on new resonance in current climate

Breaking the usual holiday tradition of presenting warm and fuzzy feel-good fare at this time of year, derring-do director Patrick Dooley and his Shotgun Players have made the gutsy choice of a heavyweight — "There Will Be No Trojan War" by Jean Giraudoux, now playing weekends at the Eighth Street Studio Theatre, 2525 Eighth St., Berkeley.

It was a calculated choice by Dooley, founder and artistic director of Shotgun, a challenge, he writes in a program note, "... a dare to our audiences to 'play chicken' with Destiny and find another way to resolve the crisis that now grips us."

"We believe that Giraudoux wrote this play when he did," Dooley writes, "for the same reasons that we have chosen to adjust our season and present it now. For Giraudoux, failure was not defined by losing to your opponent, but by giving up on yourself."

The company previously had scheduled a production of Adam Bock's original play, "The Fairy's Tail," to close its 2001 season. The whimsical play will instead launch Shotgun's residency in downtown Berkeley's Gaia Building sometime in March 2002.

"Trojan War" was written in 1935 as European passions and politics were simmering before boiling over into World War II four years later. Giraudoux saw



JACK TUCKER
Community Theater

a parallel between what was happening then and what history had drawn from ancient Greek and Trojan epics.

"There Will Be No Trojan War" begins with the victorious return of Hector, the leading Trojan general and oldest son of Troy's King Priam. This central role is given a robust reading by Malcolm Brownson.

Fred Ochs brings a wiry intensity to his portrayal of Priam. But a chastened and troubled Hector comes home not to gloat, but to convince Ulysses (Michael Asberry) and the populace that a battlefield vision while dispatching an enemy has revealed to him that waging war is a disguised form of suicide.

The leaders agree that the Trojan War will not take place. Of course it does — fueled by power, politics, sex, deceit, intrigue and all the other noble forces in human overdrive. Clive Worsley as Demokos delivers a sharply drawn performance. Roxana Ortega, making her first appearance

See THEATER, Page C5

EVENTS

Stage

Berkeley Repertory Theatre — THRUST THEATRE — "Much Ado About Nothing," by William Shakespeare, through Jan. 8. Beatrice and Benedick, who would much rather quarrel, find themselves thrown together when they try to repair a broken relationship. \$10 to \$54. Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 8 p.m.; Wednesday, Sunday, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Dec. 22, Dec. 27, Dec. 29, and Jan. 5, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; NO PERFORMANCES DEC. 25. 2015 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-647-2949, (888) 4BRTix or www.berkeleyrep.org

Eighth Street Studio Theatre — "There Will Be No Trojan War" by Jean Giraudoux, through Jan. 12. The story of Hector, the leading Trojan general who realizes that waging war is a disguised form of "suicide" that will eventually destroy him. Presented by the Shotgun Players. \$15 to \$20 general; \$10 students and seniors. Thursday through Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. Berkeley. 510-704-9210 or www.shotgunplayers.org

The Masquers Playhouse — "Inspecting Carol," closing Dec. 22. In this hit play from Seattle, a man walks into a small Midwestern theatre and asks for an audition, but the crew suspects him of being an informer for the National Endowment for the Arts and cozies right up. \$12. Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. 105 Park Place, Richmond. 510-232-4031 or www.masquers.org

Popular Music

Ashkenaz — David Fest, Aus Cajunals, Nigerian Brothers, Tropical Vibrations, Dec. 21, 8 p.m. \$8. Sensa Samba, Dec. 22, 9 p.m. \$11. Lickshot, DJ Tony Moses, Dec. 25, 10 p.m. \$5. Zulu Spear, Dec. 26, 9 p.m. \$10. Mood Swing Orchestra, Dec. 28, 9:30 p.m. \$11. Canbbean All Stars, Dec. 29, 9:30 p.m. \$11. Marimba Pacific, Dec. 30, 8 p.m. \$8. 1317 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-525-5054 or www.ashkenaz.com

Blake's On Telegraph — T'ang, Dec. 21, \$6. Most Chill Blackmob, Dec. 22, \$6. Octavius Blacktroniks, Dec. 23, \$3. Hebro, Dec. 26. Upstairs in the Tin-bar Free. Electronica with Ascension, Dec. 27, \$5. First Circle, Dec. 28, \$5. Jack West and Curvature, Freaktet, Dec. 29, \$5. Manzo, Dec. 30, \$3. Planting Seeds, Dec. 31, \$12. For ages 18 and up. Music at 9:30 p.m. 2367 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-848-0886

Cato's Ale House — The Minton-Levis Trio, Dec. 22. Good for Cows, Dec. 23. Vince Wallace Trio, Dec. 26. The Pinchdogs, Dec. 29. The Lost Trio, Dec. 30. Free. Shows at 6 p.m. 3891 Piedmont Ave., Oakland. 510-655-3349 or www.mrcato.com

Downtown — Danny Caron, Dec. 21 and Dec. 28. The Ned Boynton Combo, Dec. 22. Michael Bluestein Trio, Dec. 23. Will Bernard, piano, Tuesdays. Dave Matthews, piano, Wednesdays. Macy Blackman, piano, Thursdays. 2102 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-649-3810.

Freight And Salvage — Winter Holiday Revue, Dec. 21. With Laurie Lewis, Tom Rozum, the Clarridge Family, Jon Wilcox, Steve Seskin, the Mighty Prince Singers and the Crooked Jades. \$15.50 to \$16.50. Oak, Ash and Thorn, Dec. 22. Box Set, Dec. 28. \$15.50 to \$16.50. Kathy Kallick, Nina Gerber, Dec. 29. \$15.50 to \$16.50. Music at 8 p.m. unless otherwise noted. 1111 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-548-1761 or 510-762-BASS or www.freightandsalvage.org

Henry J. Kaiser Auditorium — Phil Lesh and Friends, Rattdog, Dec. 30, 6 p.m. \$35. 10 Tenth St., Oakland. (415) 421-TIXS.

The Pena Cultural Center — Quinteto America, Dec. 21, 8:30 p.m. \$12. Edgardo and Candela, Dec. 22, 9:30 p.m. \$12. 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568 or www.lapena.org

Music In The Plaza — Sponsored by the Downtown Berkeley Association. Girl Talk, Dec. 22, 3:30 p.m. Free. Downtown Berkeley BART Plaza, Berkeley. 510-549-2230 ext. 11 or www.downtownberkeley.org

924 Gilman St. — Amber Asylum, Kepi, Bonfire Madigan, Kevin Seconds, Wendy-O-Matic, Dec. 21. The Lab Rats, Onetime Angels, A Great Divide, Last Great Lie, Dec. 21.

See EVENTS, Page C5

Brave new Christmas

Ho, Ho Ho: A prominent sociologist explained on NPR this week his take on this Christmas will be different: "More Uncle Sam, less Santa," he said, adding, "less Scrooge, more normal."

OK, this is wartime (of sorts, anyway), and after Sept. 11, Christmas will probably seem a downbeat this year for many of you adults. But the holiday's still about kids, and in their eyes anyway, I suspect not that much has changed in the world. We owe it to youngsters to make this a merry one, even if we're hurting inside.

Whatever nasty's going on elsewhere, children still deserve their Christmas. And if you're looking for something to lift your spirits, this is it: In just a few days, all those ubiquitous and silly TV ads for Chia Pets will magically disappear. A true Christmas miracle! (And have you noticed the ad for The Clapper that features a Chia in the background?)

After unwrapping your presents on Tuesday, you might also note that TBS is running another all-day marathon of what is, for my money, easily the best Christmas movie ever, "A Christmas Story," I watch this wonderful whimsical film about a boy's childhood every year at this time — it's one of only a handful of movies I keep. Just before your dotty aunt's fruitcake, never seems to get stale — and a forever solid.

One wonderful holiday movie I haven't been able to find in several years is the wonderful and sweet 1984 adaptation of Dylan Thomas' "A Child's Christmas in Wales." If it's airing on cable or broadcast this season, please let me know ASAP by e-mail.

MEDIA NOTES: This week's announcement that NBC is buying its soon-to-be-affiliate, San Jose's KNTV, is no surprise, nor is confirmation that NBCGE had also been trying to buy KRON. And even though NBC now owns two stations here (Spanish-language KIST being the other), some broadcasters tell me they still suspect NBC is "parking" its programming on Channel 11 until it can buy KRON and its stronger signal. NBC would lose under this scenario, dump one of the two above stations.

Despite what some who rarely bother with local TV have written, I don't believe for a minute that GE has given up on getting KRON, which it has covered for at least 15 years. Buying KNTV looks to me like an interim move. Says one TV exec, "I think NBC thinks KRON's owner Young Broadcasting, which it's been trying to buy, will cave when KRON loses ratings big time during the Winter Olympics, and will eventually sell." Maybe. But KNTV's news presentation and personnel are so far behind KRON's that I can't see any local viewers tuning it in.

Revenue from local news is critical. KRON, wisely, expand its news presence next year, adding a 9 p.m. newscast, among others. This NBC channel-switching story hasn't played itself out, but by a long shot. Stay tuned. Scanning several of the local dailies, it's interesting to see the attention being lavished on the 19-49ers, and also how the 10-39ers, who have the better team and a better chance to make the Super Bowl, are being largely treated as an afterthought. Ridiculous. Saturday's prediction: Oakland 27, Tennessee 14. (Reminder: My last prediction here was a scant three points off.) It also doesn't surprise me to see that Cleveland Browns exec Carmen Polanco the darling of S.F. media types when he was Niners president, would show so little interest after last Sunday's bottle-necking incident. He didn't show a lot of it at times in S.F., either. Bob France, host of the afternoon show on Raider flagship station KTCT (it's been "The New Ticket 1050" going

See MANN, Page C5

FRIDAY MOVIE LISTINGS

Titles and showtimes subject to change
Call theaters for information

*Wheelchair Accessible

Showtimes for Friday December 21

Alameda County

Act 1 and 2

2128 Center Street, Berkeley 510-843-3456
 •The Devil's Backbone (R) 1:30, 4:30, 7:15, 10
 •Man Who Wasn't There (R) 1:15, 4:15, 7, 9:45

Albany Twin

1115 Solano Ave. Albany 510-843-3456
 •Amelie (R) 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
 •Bread and Tulips (PG-13) 1:15, 4:15, 7, 9:45

California Theatre

2113 Kennedy St. Berkeley 510-843-3456
 •Closed for renovation

Century 16 Bayfair Mall

350 Bayfair Mall, San Leandro 510-276-5694
 •Happy Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 12:10, 3:25, 7:10, 10:25
 •How High (R) 11:30, 12:45, 1:50, 3:40, 5:50, 7:20, 8:45, 10:10
 •Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (G) 11:45, 12:35, 1:45, 2:45, 3:55, 5:45, 7:50, 9:45
 •Joe Somebody (PG) 11:40, 1:55, 4:20, 7:15, 9:40
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30
 •Monsters, Inc. (G) 11:50, 2:45, 3:45, 4:45, 5:45, 6:45, 7:45, 8:45, 9:45, 10:45, 11:45
 •Not Another Teen Movie (R) 11:35, 12:40, 1:40, 2:40, 3:40, 4:45, 5:50, 6:50, 8:05, 9:10, 10:20
 •Ocean's Eleven (PG-13) 11:30, 1:35, 3:40, 5:45, 7:50, 9:55, 11:55, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 12:30, 2:55, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Century 25 Union City at Union

32100 Alvarado Blvd. Union City 510-487-9593
 •Behind Enemy Lines 2:55, 5:25, 7:55, 10:30
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 11:15, 12:10, 2:30, 3:30, 5:45, 7:10, 10:25
 •How High (R) 11:30, 12:20, 2:50, 4:30, 5:45, 7:20, 8:15, 9:40, 10:20
 •Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (G) 11, 11:35, 12:10, 1:15, 1:55, 2:35, 3:20, 4:15, 5:55, 6:20, 7:05, 8:25, 10:35
 •Joe Somebody (PG) 11, 12:15, 1:30, 2:45, 4, 5:15, 7:15, 8:35, 9:45, 10:30, 12
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 11:25, 11:50, 12:20, 12:50, 1:35, 2:10, 3:10, 3:40, 4:10, 4:40, 5:25, 6, 7, 7:30, 8, 8:30, 9:15, 10, 10:45, 11:15, 11:45
 •The Majestic (PG) 11:35, 12:30, 2:25, 3:50, 5:40, 7:25, 9, 10:40, 12:10
 •Monsters, Inc. (G) 11:20, 1:45, 4:05, 7:05
 •Not Another Teen Movie 12:15, 1:25, 2:25, 3:35, 4:45, 6:15, 7:45, 8:30, 9:10, 9:55, 10:40, 12
 •Ocean's Eleven (PG-13) 11:30, 12, 2:15, 2:40, 4:55, 5:30, 7:35, 8:10, 9:25, 10:15, 10:45, 12:05
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 11:10, 11:55, 2:20, 3, 5:20, 5:55, 7:40, 8:20, 9:05, 10:05, 10:40, 11:30

Chabot Cinema

2853 Castro Valley Blvd. Castro Valley 510-582-2555
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 12, 4, 8

Chabot Space & Science Center

10000 Skyline Blvd. Oakland 510-336-7300
 •The Living Sea (NR) 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 8:30
 •Mysteries of Egypt (Not Rated) 2:30
 •Solarmax (Not Rated) 12:30
 •To Be An Astronaut (Not Rated) 4:30

Elmwood 3

2953 College Ave. Berkeley 510-649-0530
 •Focus (PG-13) 2:35, 7
 •Iron Monkey (PG-13) 3:05, 8:15
 •K-Pax (PG-13) 12:30, 4:40, 9
 •Porn Star: The Legend of Ron Jeremy (Not Rated) 1, 5:10, 9:20
 •Sideways of New York (R) 2:45, 7:05
 •Tape (R) 1, 5:15, 7:15

Fine Arts Cinema

2451 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley 510-848-1143
 •Footage Dance Film Festival (Not Rated) 7:30
 •Geddy Dile (Not Rated) 9:35

Renaissance Grand Lake

3200 Grand Avenue, Oakland 510-452-3556
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 11:45, 2:45, 6, 9
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 11, 12, 3, 4, 7, 8
 •The Majestic (PG) 12:15, 3:15, 6:30, 9:30

Jack London Cinema

100 Washington Oakland 510-433-1320
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 11:40, 3:30, 7:10, 10:25
 •How High (R) 12:30, 3, 5:35, 8:05, 10:35
 •Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (G) 10:50, 1, 3:15, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
 •Joe Somebody (PG) 11:30, 2, 4:30, 7:20, 10, 12
 •The Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring 11, 12, 1, 2:45, 3:45, 4:45, 6:30, 7:30, 8:30, 10:15
 •Ocean's Eleven 11:45, 12:30, 5:15, 8, 10:45
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 10:45, 1:45, 4:40, 7:45, 10:45

Hayward 9

19901 Hesperian Blvd. Hayward 510-785-8000
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 12:05, 3:15, 7:05, 10:15
 •How High (R) 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10
 •Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (G) 11:20, 12, 1:50, 3:30, 4:20, 5, 7:30, 9:30
 •Joe Somebody (PG) 11:30, 2, 4:40, 7:20, 9:40
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 11, 11:50, 3, 4:10, 7, 8, 9, 11
 •The Majestic (PG) 12:40, 4, 7:10, 10:20
 •Not Another Teen Movie (R) 11:40, 2:20, 4:30, 7:15, 9:30

Naz 8 Cinemas

39400 Argonaut Way, Fremont 510-797-2000
 •Aardman's Aardman's Kharcho Rupaiya 5, 9
 •Asoka (R) 1
 •Bandar (Not Rated) 1
 •Bollywood Calling 1
 •Cheese (Not Rated) 1
 •Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham... (Not Rated) 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
 •Tamil Movie 5, 9

Renaissance Oaks Theatre

1875 Solano Avenue, Berkeley 510-526-1836
 •Majestic 11:45, 12:30, 2:45, 3:45, 6, 7, 9, 10

Piedmont Theatre

4186 Piedmont Ave. Oakland 510-843-3456
 •Amelie (R) 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:30
 •The Man Who Wasn't There (R) 1:15, 4:30, 7:15, 8:45
 •Not Another Teen Movie (R) 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10

Shattuck Cinemas

2230 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley 510-843-3456
 •Business of Strangers (R) 2:15, 5:15, 7:50, 9:55
 •The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition (G) 2:05, 6:25
 •Fat Girl (Not Rated) 4:20, 8:45
 •How High (R) 12:30, 3:35, 5:20, 7:40, 10:05
 •Monsters, Inc. (G) 12:35, 2:45, 4:55, 7:05
 •Ocean's Eleven (PG-13) 1:10, 2, 3:40, 4:40, 6:15, 7:25, 8:50
 •The Royal Tenenbaums (R) 1, 1:50, 3:30, 4:30, 6, 7, 8:30, 9:30
 •Vanilla Sky 1:05, 2:10, 4:10, 6:55, 8:10, 9:45
 •Waking Life (R) 9:20

United Artists Berkeley

2274 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley 510-843-1487
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 11,

2:30, 5:55, 9:30
 •Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (G) 11:15, 2, 4:30, 7:15, 10:05
 •Joe Somebody (PG) 11:45, 2:20, 5, 7:45, 10:35
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 10:30, 11:30, 2:45, 3:30, 7, 8, 10:45
 •Not Another Teen Movie (R) 11:10, 1:45, 4:25, 7, 9:45
 •Spy Game (R) 12, 3:15, 7:05, 10:30

United Artists Emery Bay 10

5330 Christie, Emeryville 510-420-0107
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 11:45, 3:30, 7, 10:30
 •Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (G) 10:30, 12:45, 3, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45
 •Joe Somebody (PG) 11:15, 2:15, 5, 7:50, 10:15, 12:30
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring 10:30, 11:30, 2:45, 3:45, 7, 8, 10:45, 12
 •Monsters, Inc. (G) 10:45, 1, 3:15, 5:45, 8:15
 •Not Another Teen Movie (R) 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40, 10:40, 12
 •Ocean's Eleven 10:45, 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:45, 12:30
 •Spy Game (R) 10:50, 1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 10:30, 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

United Artists Hayward 6

24300 Hayward, Hayward 510-785-3000
 •Behind Enemy Lines 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:30
 •The Majestic (PG-13) 12:45, 3, 5:15, 7:40, 9:45
 •Ocean's Eleven 1, 2, 4, 5, 7:50, 9:30, 10:20
 •Shallow Bay (R) 1:20, 7:20
 •Spy Game (R) 1:20, 7:20
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:10

Central Contra Costa

Renaissance Orinda Theatre
 4 Orinda Theatre Sq. Orinda 925-934-9050
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 11:45, 3, 6, 9
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 12, 4, 8
 •The Majestic (PG) 12:15, 3:15, 6:30, 9:30

Renaissance Park Theatre

3519 Golden Gate Way, Lafayette 925-783-7997
 •Amelie (R) 7, 9:35

Rheem Theatre

300 Park St. Moraga 925-988-3411
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 4:20, 7:30
 •Monsters, Inc. (G) 5, 7, 10
 •Ocean's Eleven (PG-13) 4:40, 7:20, 9:45
 •Spy Game (R) 9:15
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 4:10, 7, 9:35

San Francisco

AMC Van Ness 14
 1000 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco 415-922-4262
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 12, 1, 3:15, 4:15, 6:30, 7:30, 9:45, 10:40
 •How High (R) 12:35, 3, 5:20, 7:40, 10, 12:20
 •Joe Somebody (PG) 10:15, 12:30, 2:45, 5:10, 7:50, 10:15, 12:35
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 11, 12, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10:45, 11:45
 •The Majestic (PG) 11:40, 1, 4:15, 7:30, 10:45
 •Monsters, Inc. (G) 11:35, 12, 1:15, 2:15, 4, 5, 7:15, 9:30, 11:45
 •Not Another Teen Movie 12:15, 1:15, 2:30, 3:30, 4:45, 5:45, 7:10, 8:10, 9:25, 10:25, 12:35
 •The Royal Tenenbaums (R) 10, 12, 2:30, 5:05, 7:50, 9:35, 10:55, 12:35
 •Spike & Mike's 2001 Sick & Twisted Film Festival (Not Rated) 12
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 10:30, 12:45, 1:45, 3:45, 4:45, 6:45, 7:45, 9:45, 10:45, 12:45

AMC Kabuki 8

1861 Post Street, San Francisco 415-391-9800
 •How High (R) 10:50, 1:40, 4:40, 7:20, 9:45
 •Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (G) 10:40, 12:30, 2:50, 5:15, 7:45, 10:10
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 11, 3, 7, 10:55
 •Not Another Teen Movie (R) 12:40, 3:10, 5:30, 8:05, 10:20
 •Ocean's Eleven (PG-13) 11:10, 1:10, 2, 4:05, 4:55, 7:10, 7:55, 10, 10:45
 •Spy Game (R) 1:25, 4:30, 7:40, 10:35
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 12:50, 4:15, 7:30, 10:35

Bridge Theatre

3010 Grand Blvd. San Francisco 415-352-0818
 •Man Who Wasn't There 2, 4:30, 7:10, 9:45

Castro Theatre

429 Castro St. 415-621-8120
 •Theatre temporarily closed

Clay Theatre

2261 Filmore Street, San Francisco 415-352-0810
 •Amelie (R) 1:20, 4:10, 7, 9:50

Embarcadero Center Cinema

1 Embarcadero Center, San Francisco 415-352-0810
 •Burnt Money (NR) 12:15, 3:10, 6:45, 9:40
 •The Bushy and the Bunchy (R) 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:10, 9:30
 •The Devil's Backbone 12, 2:30, 5, 7:30, 10
 •Multihall Drive (R) 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
 •No Man's Land (R) 12:10, 2:20, 4:40, 7, 9:20

Lumiere Theatre

1572 California St. San Francisco 415-352-0810
 •Fat Girl (NR) 12:40, 2:50, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
 •Porn Star: The Legend of Ron Jeremy (Not Rated) 12:45, 2:55, 5:30, 7:45, 10
 •The Turandot Project (Not Rated) 12:30, 2:45, 5:10, 7:25, 9:45

Opera Plaza Cinema

601 Van Ness Blvd. San Francisco 415-352-0810
 •Bread and Tulips (PG-13) 1, 4, 7, 9:35
 •The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition (G) 1:20, 4:20
 •The Others (PG-13) 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:50
 •Sideways of New York 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 9:40
 •Waking Life (R) 7:20, 9:45

The Red Vic Theatre

1727 Haight, San Francisco 415-688-3994
 •Rock Star (R) 7:15, 9:35

The Roxie Theatre

3111 18th St. Valencia, San Francisco 415-863-1087
 •William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet (PG-13) 7, 9:30

Loews Theatres Metreon

101 Fourth St. San Francisco 415-369-6200
 •A Beautiful Mind (PG-13) 10:10, 11:10, 1:30, 2:30, 5, 6, 8:30, 9:30, 11:50
 •Behind Enemy Lines 10:40, 12:0, 4:10, 6:40, 9:20
 •Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG) 11:40, 3:30, 7:10, 10:35
 •Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (G) 10:20, 12:50, 3:20, 5:50, 8:20, 10:40
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring 10, 11, 2:10, 3:10, 6:20, 7:20, 10:30, 11:30
 •The Majestic (PG) 11:20, 2:50, 6:30, 10:10
 •Monsters, Inc. (G) 10:50, 1:50, 4:20, 7
 •Not Another Teen Movie (R) 11:50, 2:20, 5:10, 7:40, 10:20
 •Ocean's Eleven (PG-13) 10:30, 12:30, 1:40, 3:40, 4:40, 6:50, 7:50, 10, 11
 •Spy Game (R) 9:50
 •Vanilla Sky (R) 11:30, 12:40, 3, 4, 6:10, 7:30, 8:30, 9:40, 10:45

Loews Ima Theatre

101 Fourth Street, San Francisco 415-369-6200
 •Galapagos: The Enchanted Voyage (Not Rated) 10:45, 2
 •The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (PG-13) 3:50, 5, 12:10
 •Re: Back to The Cretecon (NR) 12:20

NOW PLAYING

Below are capsule reviews of movies playing at area theaters. The reviewers are Vera H-C Chan and Mary F. Pols. Times: Glenn Lovell, San Jose Mercury News; Robert W. Butler and Desmond Ryan, Knight Ridder Newspapers; Anthony Breznican, Matt Crenson, David Gorman, Chris Grygiel, Christy Lemire, Tim Molloy, Sheila Norman-Culp, Malcolm Ritter, Bob Thomas and Matt Wolf. Associated Press; Leighton Kline, Boston Globe; Duane Dudek, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel; John Anderson, Bob Heister and Gene Seymour, Newsday; Stephen Holden, Dave Kehr, Elvis Mitchell, A.O. Scott and Lawrence Van Gelder, New York Times; Jack Mathews, New York Daily News; Bob Strauss and Glenn Whigg, Los Angeles Daily News; Kenneth Turan and Kevin Thomas, Los Angeles Times; Henry Sheehan, Orange County Register; Mark Caro and Robert K. Elder, Chicago Tribune; Nancy Churnin, Gary Dowell, Tom Mastrand and Tom Sims, Chris Vogner and Philip Wuntch, Dallas Morning News; and Desson Howe, Washington Post

"THE AFFAIR OF THE NECKLACE" Based on a true story set in pre-Revolutionary France, this film is a clever con-artist tale about a scheme to steal a lavish diamond necklace. Hilary Swank plays Jeanne de la Motte-Valois, an orphan trying to regain the fortune of her disgraced father. She falls in love with court gigolo Retaux de Vilette (Simon Baker), who instructs her on the subtle arts of manipulation. They devise an elaborate ruse to defraud the cardinal, disgrace the queen and return Jeanne to the wealth she deserves. Although it looks like a costume drama, it's really a movie about human jacks. Director Charles Shyer wisely prevents the visual opulence from obscuring the cruelty at the heart of this political intrigue. — A. Breznican. (R) 2 hours. B

"AMELIE" A feel-good movie in the best possible sense, a comic fable from French director Jean-Pierre Jeunet that vibrates with joy and fast-dances with life. Amelie (the relentlessly charming Audrey Tautou) is a lonely young lady who keeps a watchful eye on the rest of the world. One day she sets out to re-gain a child's treasure with its long-grown owner and discovers she likes playing emotional Robin Hood. Setting out on a path to help her neighbors and the denizens of the cafe where she works, she inadvertently trips into a love affair with a guy (Mathieu Kassovitz) who might be as sweetly eccentric as she is. Every time you think the movie is getting too sticky-sweet, Jeunet throws something tart and funny in our path. — M. Pols. (R: sexual content.) 2 hours. A

"BEHIND ENEMY LINES" A military thriller heavy on the flag-waving, but notable for its brisk action sequences and the charisma of its star, Owen Wilson. He plays an American flight navigator who gets shot down in the forests of Bosnia. While a team of nasty Serbs hunt him like a fox, fearful he'll give away the location of a mass grave, his commanding officer (Gene Hackman) tries to figure out a way to rescue him. The movie takes a rapid swan dive near the end, heading into major cheese territory, but there's a lot of lively action along the way. — M. Pols. (PG-13: war violence and some language.) 1 hour, 55 minutes. C+

"BLACK KNIGHTS" If you like Martin Lawrence's shtick, then go. Otherwise, stand in line for "Harry Potter." Lawrence tones it down as Jamal Sky-walker, a vainglorious Los Angeles theme park worker who ends up in the year 1328. The film can't stay the kind of facile fab that purports to be: Horny princesses, behemoths, revolution. 21st-century cussing and humiliation by manure detract from the general merry-making. Lawrence does manage to convey some charm, but as the fish out of water, he can only flop around so much. — V. Chan. (PG-13: language, brief sexuality, scatological humor.) 1 hour, 36 minutes. C

"BONES" Snoop Dogg raises hell as a ghetto ghost out to avenge his own murder and the subsequent deification of his once-happy 'hood. Despite a bit of social consciousness, a few good laughs and some noddies to other horror directors, "Bones" turns into a typical modern genre piece as gore and implausible situations run riot. That said, Pam Grier is a standout as a freaked-out psychic. — B. Strauss. (R: violence, language, drug use.) 1 hour, 38 minutes. C

"BREAD AND TULIPS" This amiable new comedy suggests that an older, better Italy of imagination, rationality and civility survives on the fringes of a modern nation obsessed with consumerism, empty prosperity and easy pleasure. That city, this film says, is Venice, and it's the location where an unhappy housewife (Licia Maglietta) blossoms, and meets a melancholy waiter. Maglietta is quite good, but the film seems a little too sentimental and pat for its own good. — A.O. Scott. (PG-13: a few sexual situations.) 1 hour, 44 minutes. C+

"BURNT MONEY" Marcelo Pinyero's operatic "Burnt Money" is a gay "Bonnie and Clyde" based on a true story that occurred in Argentina and Uruguay between September and November 1965. Fontana (Ricardo Bartis), a veteran bank robbery mastermind, is having second thoughts about the team he's lined up for his next job. His driver Cuervo (Pablo Echarr) is a cokehead who spends the night before the heist on nonstop sex. His stickup men are lovers Lena (Leonardo Sbaraglia) and Angel (Eduardo Noriega). They are fearless, but Angel hears voices, and there's no guessing what they're going to command him to do next. The team grabs the loot and heads for Uruguay. It is in the limbo of a hideout that the story begins in earnest as the men start unraveling. The cinematography is wonderfully gritty. "Burnt Money" represents the bold, confident kind of filmmaking that gets away with everything. — K. Thomas. (NR) 2 hours, 5 minutes. B

"THE BUSINESS OF STRANGERS" Middle-aged executive Julie (Stockard Channing) blows a sales presentation thanks to the tardiness of twentysomething assistant Paula (Julia Stiles). The subsequent plot twists lead fingers to find judgments about the characters, only to throw them into serious doubt.

When Julie thinks she's about to be dismissed, she is instead promoted Julie fires Paula, but then meets her in a hotel bar and tries to apologize. A one-night power struggle between the two unfolds in the business-class captivity of airport and hotel environments. Writer-director Patrick Stettner lets the audience form its own conclusions about the issues he raises — gender politics, personal vs. professional choices, and the generation gap among working women. In the end, we wonder if we know the business of strangers at all. — T. Molloy. (R: violence and some sexuality.) 1 hour, 24 minutes. C+

"DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE" Stripped down to the dumbest fundamentals of the family thriller genre, the result is a film that doesn't trust viewers enough to patiently build genuine suspense. Instead, it signals every plot point much too early. Set in a small hamlet on the Maryland coast, "Disturbance" stars John Travolta as Frank Morrison, the good-guy weekend dad to Danny (Matt O'Leary). His ex-wife, Susan (Teri Polo), marries Rick Barnes, a wealthy new-guy-in-town (Vince Vaughn), and Frank just knows there's something really wrong with the dude. When Danny starts telling unbelievable adults that his stepfather is a murderer, only Frank believes him. Of course, it's oh so clear all along that Rick is up to no good, so the plot offers no surprises. — B. Strauss. (PG-13: violence, child in jeopardy, language.) 1 hour, 31 minutes. D+

"THE ENDURANCE" A documentary about Sir Ernest Shackleton's legendary journey to the Antarctic, based on Caroline Alexander's book. On board his ship "The Endurance," with his crew of 27, Shackleton spent one agonizing winter trapped in the ice pack, then more than a year trying to reach civilization and save his crew. The film brings the story to life and imparts a timely message about man's tenacity, his ability to survive against all odds and the loyalty inherent in true leadership. The narrative is straightforward PBS-style fare, but it is made remarkable by the use of Frank Hurley's photographs and moving footage of the journey. Don't miss this one. — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 33 minutes. A-

"FAT GIRL" A vile movie, but one that is viciously effective in its intent to provoke. Two young sisters, one 12 and overweight, one 15 and strikingly beautiful, are on holiday with their parents at the French seaside. The beauty hooks up with an Italian law student, who badgers her into giving him her virginity in more than one sense while we,

Reviews

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...sexual situations.) 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE": Director Chris Columbus has done what fans of J. K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS": The Hughes brothers' "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN": The Hughes brothers' "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE": The Hughes brothers' "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX": The Hughes brothers' "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS PART 1": The Hughes brothers' "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS PART 2": The Hughes brothers' "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS PART 3": The Hughes brothers' "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

"HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS PART 4": The Hughes brothers' "Harry Potter" books played out, bringing the story of the life of a 11-year-old wizard to life exactly as we all envisioned it. There are flaws here, but none, mistakes that often go on in hand with "big" movies — way too much music, a nip and a tuck here and there in a story that sprawled magically on the page, and computer graphics that occasionally show the limitations of movie magic. But the three Harry Potter movies have far exceeded expectations, and this is the best of the best. If you're not into the Harry Potter, it's an entirely different question, one we're not ashamed to ask: "How can we not be?" — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 44 min. 1 hour, 44 min.

and dry wit, this is distinctly Coen brothers fare, but if you compare it to their best work, it feels more like an itch the brothers needed to scratch than, say, a "Fargo." Of course, with them, even an itch is going to be entertaining. — M. Pols. (R: a scene of violence.) 1 hour, 56 minutes B

"MONSTERS, INC.": Thanks to the rich imaginations at the Emeryville-based animation house Pixar, small children everywhere will soon have a new perspective on the monsters they fear may lurk under their beds. The genius premise here is that yes, of course monsters are real, but vulnerable. They're terrified of children, but they continue to frighten them because back in monsterland, scream power is harnessed and used as the main source of energy. The ebbing innocence of the world's children has created an energy crisis. This is a wonderful, funny story for the whole family, rich with superior animation and major heart. Voiced by John Goodman and Billy Crystal, among others. — M. Pols. (G) 1 hour, 32 minutes. A-

"MULHOLLAND DR.": At the end of this mind-trip, all you can do is laugh. David Lynch has once again led us on a merry dance through a minefield littered with freaks, apple-pie moments we can't trust, terrifying weirdoes and puzzling, possibly pointless scenes. A beautiful amnesiac and a cheery, innocent ingenue set out to solve a mystery. Then they become different people. Chances are it's all a dream, or at least half a dream. Makes "Memento" look easy to understand. Lynch probably won't win himself any new fans with this one, but old ones will enjoy this excursion into his creative mind. — M. Pols. (R: violence, language and some strong sexuality.) 2 hours, 26 minutes. B+

"NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE!": This lowball comedy attempts to do with the teen movie genre what "Scary Movie" did with horror. So every character is an overdone stereotype, and the plot is really just a series of gags making fun of the clichés that abound in other teen movies. And don't forget the extreme gross-out jokes. And the racist humor. Stupid, offensive entertainment delivered with nothing more than a smirk is still stupid and offensive. In the end, even the title gets it wrong. This is another teen movie; it's just not another even halfway decent one. — T. Maunsted. (R) 1 hour, 33 minutes. F

"OCEAN'S ELEVEN": It's not what you might have hoped for from an Oscar-winning director, but Steven Soderbergh's remake of the Rat Pack classic about a casino heist in Las Vegas is pretty winning stuff. George Clooney stars as Danny Ocean, the leader of the new pack. The cast is all A-list, although some, like Julia Roberts, deliver performances more suitable to the B list. But Brad Pitt, Elton Gould and Carl Reiner are a delight to watch, and the movie sings along with that Soderbergh style and rhythm. Keep your expectations low and you'll have a good time. — M. Pols. (PG-13: some language and sexual content.) 1 hour, 55 minutes. B+

"OUT COLD": A teen-oriented comedy about snowboarders trying to halt Lee Majors from turning an Alaskan resort into a yuppie haven. All the clichés are trotted out in this little sex comedy, including the appearance of a Playboy Playmate. One of the film's redeeming qualities — there are a couple of others, namely the likable cast — is the snowboarding sequences, the most interesting scenes in a film that's entirely formulaic. — C. Lemire. (PG-13: language, crude and sexual humor and substance abuse.) 1 hour, 29 minutes. C-

"PORN STAR: THE LEGEND OF RON JEREMY": A sad but funny documentary about unlikely porn star Ron Jeremy, a short, portly Jewish boy from Brooklyn with an unfortunate amount of body hair. He's made some 1,600 porn films, but all Jeremy really wants is to be accepted by mainstream Hollywood. As unlikely as his quest is, director Scott Gill laces the movie with so much humor that this is certainly the most surprisingly funny documentary of the year. — M. Pols. (NR) 1 hour, 19 minutes. B

"RUSH HOUR 2": Peppy, unpretentious fun with a paper-thin plot. It's a rush job of a sequel. Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker are back, chasing bad guys through Hong Kong, L.A. and Las Vegas, cracking jokes all the way. Some of them fall flat, but there are still many good chuckles here. Chan, more comfortable with English now, is a gem, but director Brett Ratner blows the buzz by showing us a series of outtakes at the end that are far funnier than anything we've seen to date. — M. Pols. (PG-13: action violence, language and some sexual material.) 1 hour, 29 minutes. C+

"SHALLOW HAL": From advertisements and previews, this comedy from the Farrelly brothers seems like it must be astonishingly insulting to overweight people. But while it does plunge cheerfully into the brothers' customary tastelessness, it is also oddly sweet, soulful, and even, ages, well-intentioned. Jack Black plays shallow Hal, an average guy only attracted to women of supermodel stature. All that changes when he's hypnotized by self-help guru Anthony Robbins, who opens his eyes to the beauty of women such as Rosemary, a 300-pound Peace Corps volunteer. To Hal, Rosemary is slim, svelte, and beautiful. The movie is sloppily shot and edited, but it's got its charms, and the Farrellys clearly have big hearts. — M. Pols. (PG-13: language and sexual content.) 1 hour, 53 minutes. B-

"SIDEWALKS OF NEW YORK": A greasy, gritty about six New Yorkers whose lives are intertwined because of their romantic choices, written and directed by Ed Burns ("The Brothers McMullen"), who also co-stars as Tommy, a TV executive looking for love. He hooks up with Maria (Rosario Dawson), a schoolteacher who is recently divorced from Ben, a doorman. Ben has a fresh crush on Ashley (the excellent Brittany Murphy), a 19-year-old waitress who is sleeping with a married man, Griffin (a cheerfully repugnant Stanley Tucci). Meanwhile, Griffin is married to morally upright Annie (Heather Graham), who happens to be Tommy's real estate agent and, possibly, his soulmate. Lightweight, like Woody Allen without hard feelings, but fun, with lots of frank — and accurate — talk about sex and love. — M. Pols. (R: sexual content and language.) 1 hour, 40 minutes. B

"SPY GAME": According to director Tony Scott's ("Top Gun") lively thriller, everyone at the CIA is a bonehead, except for Nathan Murr (Robert Redford), a leftover from the Cold War days. It's 1991, and Nathan has to play cat-and-mouse with the gang at Langley to save his protégé Tom Bishop (Brad Pitt) from certain death at the hands of the Chinese government. Those looking for major thrills will be disappointed that Nathan never wields any weapon more powerful than a cell phone or a fax machine. But Redford is mighty appealing in what is his best role in years. Pitt's part, as the idealistic Tom, is more limited, but he's fine as well. (In every sense of the word.) — M. Pols. (R: language, violence and brief sexuality.) 2 hours, 7 minutes. B

"TAPE": Another intelligent, thought-provoking film from director Richard Linklater. Two old high-school buddies, one a slacker drug dealer (Ethan Hawke) and the other an ambitious yuppie filmmaker (Robert Sean Leonard), meet in a seedy hotel and talk about the past, specifically the slacker's contention that the yuppie date-raped his ex-girlfriend in high school. Eventually the girl (Uma Thurman) turns up and we get the truth. Sort of. "Tape" excels in exposing the role that power plays in relationships, even within friendships. The problem with the film is it feels too obviously like a Lesson in Human Relations, but at the same time it's got under your skin and defies you to forget it. — M. Pols. (R: language and drug content.) 1 hour, 25 minutes. B

"TRAINING DAY": A taut drama of police corruption, "Training Day" is to be admired for reaching high toward the "Serpico" standard. But it's only two-thirds there; the other third is self-important nonsense. Denzel Washington goes way over the top as a corrupt narcotics cop showing a young trainee (an excellent, low-key Ethan Hawke) the ropes. There are many implausible plot points throughout, including the notion that a training day would last 24 hours, or include a front row seat to corruption that you'd think the cops might want to keep mum about, but director Anthony Fuqua keeps the suspense high until the bitter, bloody and ridiculous end. — M. Pols. (R: strong, brutal violence, pervasive language, drug content and brief nudity.) 2 hours. B

"VANILLA SKY": A remake of Alejandro Amenabar's intriguing but mildly silly 1997 film "Abre Los Ojos" ("Open Your Eyes") that leaves us asking why bother? Director Cameron Crowe is too talented to waste his time making a movie that hasn't even had time to gather dust on video store shelves. Tom Cruise plays yet another well-heeled jerk in need of redemption. He's got a gorgeous, unstable model (Cameron Diaz) hanging off his sleeve, but he's suddenly drawn to another glittery prize, a frisky Spanish girl (Penelope Cruz). A car accident sets the story's crazy plot in motion, but it's hard to care much about any of this. — M. Pols. (R: for sexuality and strong language.) 2 hours, 16 minutes. C

went on to gigs at souldies out-let Kiss-98.1 (where she now does morning drive), KPIX (where Renel does celeb chat), and the Giants' P.A. system. At least one of the three at KMEL had talent, and it sure wasn't the boorish London. Here's another brilliant move by KNBR programmer Bob Agnew, the same guy who unearthed Pete Franklin — twice...

Looking for a good news home page on the Web to find the latest breaking news during the war on terrorism? One always have to be careful on the Web, of course. A few weeks ago, an Alameda reader tipped me that he's become hooked on the once-gossipy Drudge Report for breaking news. (www.drudgereport.com). The reader was right (Thanks, Jerry): Drudge usually carries fresh Afghanistan/AI Qaida headlines, and his links to strong breaking news stories, often the Times of London or the Evening Telegraph, can't be beat. Check it out.

Finally found, as they used to say when I (briefly) lived in Bolinas ("The Land That Time Forgot"), um, like, Happy Solstice, Dude...

This Christmas, may your portfolios increase this coming year, and may your homes be filled with joy. (I have a feeling next Christmas will be a lot more joyous in several ways, including economically.) May your 401-K's be devoid of Enron (I dumped mine at \$4 — dollars, not cents — thank God) and may your socks be full of goodies.

Each year at this time I would be remiss not to thank all you great, well-informed, and attentive readers in Alameda, Oakland, Montclair, Piedmont, Kensington, Berkeley, Albany, El Cerrito and other fine East Bay communities for all your great e-mail and letters this past year. Have a happy and joyous holiday season!

Comments? Questions? E-mail Bill at Newsman@sonic.net

Lord

FROM PAGE C3
make fear start at the base of your spine and work its way up until it erupts in your shoulders in one giant shudder. Tolkien's version of "The Fellowship of the Ring" is potent enough to make your heart race late at night. Middle-earth is truly in jeopardy; this isn't some battle we've all just got to wade through before the happy ending. Jackson delivers Tolkien's sense of deep menace, many times over.

Take the Black Riders. Sauron's henchmen, they chase the Fellowship, seeking the ring. Devoid of form and cloaked in black, they wheel about on their tall black horses, speaking only two words: "Baggins" and "Shire." Innocuous enough words, but the way they come hissing with hatred out of those empty hoods, you may find yourself fighting the urge to take refuge on the sticky floor of the theater, lest they mistake you for a Baggins or a Shire.

Jackson also knows how to devastate. There's a scene about two-thirds through the movie

where something terrible happens to one character. I had just reread this scene days before and knew it well, but I was still moved to tears, partly from the sadness of the moment and partly from joy at the sweet eloquence of McKellen's acting.

Even a Tolkien purist perturbed by the license Jackson has taken with some story elements can take solace in how much he's got absolutely right and the way he consistently manages to blow us away with his visuals. There's a breathtaking scene where Bilbo asks Frodo if he can hold the ring one more time, and as Frodo refuses, we see a flash of something evil come over Bilbo's face. It shifts, his teeth grow pointy, and we see the physical signs of the ring's corrupting influence.

The landscapes, entirely filmed in New Zealand, are as sweeping as anyone, even Tolkien, could ever hope for. Even the things that had to be faked, like the enormous statues of Aragorn's ancestors that stand like sentries on both sides of a river, are convincingly monumental. All the technical work was done by New Zealand's Weta, a special-effects shop

poised to give Industrial Light + Magic a run for its money.

To grumble just a bit: As Frodo, Wood is very good, but he fixes the camera with a perplexed gaze a few too many times. The music is often heavy-handed, pumped up wildly during some action sequences or going all soft and squishy when the hobbits are showing one another affection. Jackson seems more at ease with evil. He makes it so exciting you don't want to linger long in the "good" places, which are too cutesy to be as enticing as they ought to be.

Still, "The Fellowship of the Ring" is a major achievement, as emotionally intense as "Star Wars" was at its best, back before we'd seen it multiple times, but richer, far more moving and better acted. Jackson's vision of Middle-earth is worthy of Tolkien, and there's probably no better compliment one could pay the film. How can we wait a whole year for the next installment?

Mary Pols is the Times movie critic. She can be reached at 925-945-4741 or at mpols@cttimes.com.

Theater

FROM PAGE C3
with the Shotgun company in the pivotal role of Helen, is arch, mysterious and manipulative. Others in the large cast include Michael Cheng (a brutish Ajax), Beth Donohue (Andromache, Hector's wife), Brent Rosenbaum (Troilus), Kimberly Wilday (Cassandra), John Patrick Moore (a bemused Paris), Trish Mulholland as the perceptive Hecuba, Sabrina Kline (Busiris, a lawyer), Andy Alabran (Topman) and Barry Horwitz, an old man. Nine-year-old Sarah Maslin is a charming and perky Polyxene. Greg Lucey imbues the role of the nattering mathematician with a glint of humor not otherwise present in this grand scale tragedy.

The grandeur of the language, commendably well-spoken, and the awesome sweep of the historic episodes, however, are diminished by the space constraints of the Eighth Street Studio Theatre, essentially a large and lofty room. The set is minimal, centered on the emblematic gate, beyond which we are to imagine lurks the tiger of war. Costuming is eclectic modern, but works well enough.

Plays of this lineage, of necessity, are didactic because the

aim is to drive home a message. "There Will Be No Trojan War" is worthy, but the language is soaring, penetrating and provocative.

Not for everyone, particularly at this season. But Shotgun Players deserve an A for Audacity, if not total Achievement, in bringing forth this powerful, insightful, quality play.

The play may be more familiar as "Tiger at the Gates," the title Christopher Fry gave to his 1955 adaptation (the one Shotgun is doing) which won the Critics' Circle Award as the best foreign play of the year and several other awards.

"There Will Be No Trojan War" plays at 8 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays, closing Jan. 12, 2002. Tickets are \$15 general; \$10 for seniors, students and TBA members. Call 510-784-8210.

HEY, LET'S LIGHTEN UP: For a lighter note, let's look beyond the holidays into the New Year. Central Works Theater Ensemble is coming up with "Every Inch a King," a new comedy written by Gary Graves and directed by Jan Zvaifer. It opens Jan. 11, playing Thursdays through Sundays at La Val's Subterranean, 1834 Euclid Ave., Berkeley. Show times are 8 p.m. weekdays; 5 p.m. Sundays, with a couple of extra 5 p.m. Saturday shows

on Jan. 26 and Feb. 2. Tickets are \$8-\$18 sliding scale; pay what you can for the Thursday outings, and the preview on Jan. 10 is free. Call 510-558-1381.

The "king" in question is an old geezer — now be kind, folks; no, it's NOT Scrooge Redux, who's been on unemployment since right after Christmas — but an aging guy who made a fortune in the rubber stamp industry. But he's fading fast and his pain-in-the-you-know-whats personality is not improving with time.

His three daughters wrestle with questions we may all face sooner or later. Sell the family home? Do what the old grump says? What do we really owe our parents, or parents their children? If that sounds funny as a crutch, Central Works says it's "hilarious." And they wouldn't lie about a thing like that at a time like this. Would they?

Berkeley-based Central Works develops original plays through intensive, collaborative workshops. The company has been around since 1991.

Send items of interest to Jack Tucker at 4301 Lakeside Drive, Richmond, CA 94806; fax to 510-262-2776; e-mail to jtucker@cttimes.com, or call 510-262-2768. Include a contact name and number.

Events

FROM PAGE C3
Gabriel's Ratchet, Dec. 22. Over My Dead Body, Penny, Breaker Breaker, Some Still Believe, Dec. 23, 5 p.m. What Happens Next, Rambo, Lie, Youth Riot, Lugosi, Dec. 28. Defiance, The P.A.W.N.S., Panty Raid, Sexy, Gluk, Dec. 29. Featuring a drag show.

\$5. Music at 8 p.m. unless otherwise noted. 924 Gilman St., Berkeley. 510-525-9926.

The Starry Plough Pub — Holcombe Waller, Brad Davenport, Carmie de Forest, Dec. 21. \$5.

Lemon Lime Lights, Jennifer McTrick and the Slappin' Pistons, Captain Bringdown, Dec. 22. \$5.

Pigeonhole, Anton Barbeau, Soldier of Fortune Cookie, Dec. 23. \$5.

Buffalo Rodeo, The Unreal Band, Dec. 29. \$5.

"The Starny Session," Sunday, 8 p.m. Irish traditional music and song led by Shay Black. Sliding scale.

"Dance Class and Ceili," Monday, 7 p.m. Traditional Irish music and dance.

"Poetry Slam with MC Charles and Elik," Wednesday, 8:30 p.m. \$5.

For ages 21 and over unless otherwise noted. Sunday and Wednesday, 8 p.m.; Thursday, 9:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 9:45 p.m. unless otherwise noted. 3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-2082.

Yoshi's — Charlie Hunter, John Ellis, Christ Lovejoy, Stephen Chopek, Norah Jones, through Dec. 23. The program is titled "Home for the Holidays." \$18 to \$22 general; Sunday matinee: \$5 per child; \$10 for an adult and a child.

The Afro-Cuban Jazz Masters, Dec. 26 through Dec. 30. Featuring Maraca, Changuito, Tata Guines, Giovanni Hidalgo and more. \$22 to \$26 general. Sunday matinee: \$10 for an adult and a child, \$5 children.

SPECIAL EVENT — "Seventh Annual Youth Arts Benefit Concert," Dec. 22, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Featuring Richard Howell, Art Hirahara, Eric Crystal, David Ewell, Nubia I, John Santos, Marley Lavell's youth group and others. Sponsored by African Roots of Jazz, Yoshi's House of Jazz and Poetry Works. Proceeds benefit African Roots of Jazz, The youth Guidance Center and The Art Ship. \$15.

Unless otherwise noted, music at 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.; Sunday 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland. 510-238-9200 or 510-762-2277 or www.yoshis.com

Classical Music

Julia Morgan Center For The Arts

"A Celtic Peace: A Bay Area Celtic Christmas Celebration," Dec. 23, 7:30 p.m. A program of Irish music and dance celebrating the Winter Solstice and the Christmas season.

\$10 adults; \$5 children. 2640 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-8542 or www.juliamorgan.org

Dance

Oakland Ballet —

"Nutcracker," closing Dec. 24. A

Victorian family Christmas party, a magical Christmas tree and a young girl's dream of a life-size heroic Nutcracker who takes her on a magical journey to the land of the Sugar Plum Fairy are all part of this holiday classic. Choreographed by Ronn Guidi to the music of Tchaikovsky.

\$10 to \$45. Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.; Dec. 21, 8 p.m.; Dec. 24, 11 a.m. Paramount Theatre, 2025 Broadway, Oakland. 510-625-8497 or (415) 421-8497 or www.oaklandballet.org

Eagles Hall Zydeco Cajun Dances —

Dance lesson, 8 p.m.; concert and dance, 9 p.m.

2305 Alameda Ave., Alameda. (415) 285-6285 or ddeismone.home.mindspring.com

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Mann

FROM PAGE C3

on three years now), noted after that boorish display in Cleveland (followed by one Monday night in "Nawlns" on ABC). "The sale of beer after halftime has got to stop." Indeed, and to think Raider fans get a bad rap. If the name of the replacement for Gary Radnich on KNBR's morning show in two weeks sounds vaguely familiar, it should. Radnich, who'll get to sleep in and start at 9:30 a.m. as of Jan. 7, will yield mornings to the witless John London and a sidekick. You may remember London as half of the talent-impaired "Morning Zoo" on KMEL in the 1980's. London and Engelman were a pairing that apparently dissolved in acrimony after one of the pair had serious health problems and the other took over the show. (Isn't radio wonderful?) That KMEL show also made Oaklander Renel Brooks-Moon a local mini-star. She

Calendar

Submissions to the Community Calendar must be received Thursdays one week prior to publication. Listings are on a space-available basis.

Children

Teen Support Group meets twice a month Tuesday evenings at the Women's Cancer Resource Center, 3023 Shattuck Ave. The free support group is for teens who have a parent or caregiver with cancer. The meeting is co-facilitated by a teen whose mother had breast cancer. For more information, call PediatricCare at 531-7551.

Check out books from the Berkeley Richmond Jewish Community Center Library. Spend quality time with your kids, meet with the children's librarian, research your Jewish roots or check out best sellers. The library is located at 1414 Walnut St. Hours: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays. For more information, call 849-0237.

Hall of Health, 2230 Shattuck Ave., a health exhibit museum of Children's Hospital Oakland, presents free puppet shows, 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. The Kids on the Block, the award-winning educational puppet troupe, features puppets with such conditions as cerebral palsy, blindness and Down syndrome. The Hall of Health is a hands-on community, health-education museum and science center sponsored by Children's Hospital Oakland and Alta Bates Medical Center. Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, call 549-9682.

The City of El Cerrito, offers special programs for children from 22 months to 5 years of age. These programs are designed to offer parents an opportunity to leave their pre-school children in a safe atmosphere under qualified supervision. The program for ages 22 months to 3-1/2 years meets Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon. Registration is continuous as long as space is available. Located at 7007 Mosser Lane. For more information, call Judie, 215-4371.

LGBTQ Parent and Prospective Parent Groups meet the first Saturday of the month 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. with concurrent childcare. All groups meet at the Pacific Center at 2712 Telegraph Ave. in Berkeley. Donations are requested, but not required. For information or to RSVP, contact Anna at familyprogram@yahoo.com or 415-789-8560 classes.

Lawrence Hall of Science, UC Berkeley's public science museum and center for K-12 science and math education offers three residential summer science camps, including two camps held at actual University of California field research stations; and three Sierra backpacking summer science camps. Each camp emphasizes fun outdoor science explorations through hands-on, inquiry-based activities, as well as lots of traditional camp fun. Each camp has a unique theme, and is designed for a specific age group. Call 842-2275 or e-mail to: lshinfo@uclink.berkeley.edu. To register, call 642-5134.

"Theater Rats," Julia Morgan's kid's theater camp program, offers swimming, singing, dancing, acting, and field games as some of its exciting activities. The camp is a two-week session for kids 6-14. Call 883-7023 for additional information.

Community

St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727

College Ave., presents its do it yourself Christmas Tableaux at 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 23, following the 10 a.m. worship service. Children and adults are invited to be a part of the Christmas story by dressing as angels, shepherds, wise person, Mary, and Joseph, and having their picture taken by the manager. Costumes and cameras will be provided. There will also be opportunities for candle making and Christmas crafts. Call 845-6830 for more information.

Julia Morgan Center of the Arts features a "New Year's Eve Gala Concert," by the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, at 8 p.m. Monday, Dec. 31. Edgar Braun conducts a program of classical favorites for this 18th annual New Year's Eve Gala performance of the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra. Musical selections include classical favorites such as Mendelssohn's Scottish Symphony and Beethoven's masterful violin concerto, featuring 14-year-old violin virtuoso Nathan Olson. Tickets: \$15, available at the door. For more details, call the center at 845-8542 or visit the Web site at www.juliamorgan.org.

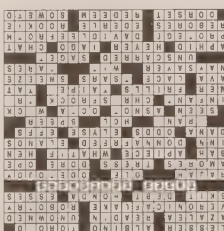
Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2911 Russell St., presents a free holiday "Family Day," for children and adults from noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 25. Art projects, live music by Gerry Tenney and California Klezmer at 2 p.m., and 3 p.m. The event also features a "Princess Moxie Rules," a 30 minute puppet musical and puppet-making projects and much more. Complimentary snacks and beverages will be provided. Call 549-6950 for more information.

Julia Morgan Center of the Arts presents "A Celtic Peace: A Bay Area Celtic Christmas Celebration," at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 23. Celebrate the Winter Solstice and the Christmas season with an evening of Irish music and dance with Todd Denman and friends. The event is an evening with the entire family. Tickets: \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, available at the door. For more information, call 845-8542.

Exhibits

Berkeley Art Museum, 2625 Durant Ave., continues its exhibit of "Ansel Adams from the University of California Collection," through March 10. The exhibition consists of a selection of photographs and memorabilia drawn from the extensive holdings of the UC Bancroft Library. For more information, call 643-6494.

Traywick Gallery, 1316 10th St., presents sculpture by Bay Area artist Dennis Begg from Jan. 5 through Feb. 9. This is Begg's second solo exhibition at the gallery. Showing concurrently in the gallery's back exhibition space are new works on paper by Bay Area artist Steve Briscoe. An artists reception takes place from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 5. Gallery hours: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, or by appointment. For more information,



NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

FLUNKIES

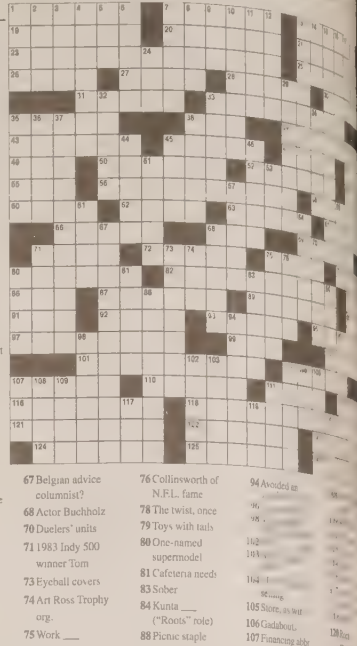
By Fred Piscop/Edited by Will Shortz

ACROSS

- 1 Second-rate
- 7 White mt., e.g.
- 13 Donut, mathematically
- 19 Showy shrub
- 20 Enter, as data
- 21 Up for grabs
- 23 Screwball actress?
- 25 Science of programmable machines
- 26 Burlesque bit
- 27 It's outstanding
- 28 Passport producer
- 30 Twists turns
- 31 Checks out carefully
- 33 Turners of blind eyes
- 35 Big Indian
- 38 Cousin of "Rah!"
- 39 Schiller work adapted by Beethoven
- 43 Ovid opus
- 45 Lock
- 47 French illustrator
- 48 Not shut, to Shelley
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- 50 Per
- 52 "Suppose..."
- 54 Bidly
- 55 The Admiral
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- 10 Ladybug's prey
- 11 Romance novelist
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- 116 Junior partner, maybe
- 118 Mad-dog singer?
- 121 Widens, in a way
- 122 News-making 1926 Channel swimmer
- 123 Topy
- 124 Settling of many Hardy novels
- 125 Turn in
- 126 Site of 1970's marches
- 1 W.C.'s
- 2 Book before Daniel Abbe
- 3 Lahore garb
- 4 Miniature racer
- 5 Disk, to Donnie
- 6 Bootleggers' worries
- 7 Some Semites
- 8 Took a powder
- 9 Harbour, Fla.
- 10 Some latters
- 11 Canon rival
- 12 Uninterruptedly
- 13 1926 La Scala premiere



call 527-1214.

Theater/Film/Dance

Julia Morgan Center of the Arts features "Big Fat Year End Kiss off Comedy Shot IX" by Will Durst and Company at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 26. An evening of standup political comedy and improvisational sketches encapsulating the events of the year 2001. This ninth annual show features the talents of Will Durst, Johnny Steele, Debi Durst, Michael Bassier, Steven Kravitz and other players. Ticket: \$17. Call 925-798-1300 for tickets. For more details on the event, call the center at 845-8542.

"David Fest," a celebration of the life of Ashkenaz founder David Nadel, takes place at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 21, at the Ashkenaz, 1317 San Pablo Avenue. Three bands, "Tropical Vibrations," "Babá Ken Okulolo and the Nigerian Brothers," and "Aux Cajunals," will perform. All ages are welcome. For more information, call the showline at 525-5054 or visit the Ashkenaz Web

site at www.ashkenaz.com.

Meetings

Berkeley Camera Club meets at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday evenings, at the North-Bay Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. Share your slides and prints and learn what other photographers are doing. Monthly field trips. For more information, call Don at 525-3565.

Julia Morgan Center of the Arts hosts an informational and discussion session regarding dance opportunities in the Bay Area. The center opens its doors to the dance community and presents its plans for Dance Week 2002 and for future dance performances on the stage of Julia Morgan Theatre. The event is free. RSVP to Bridget Frederick at bridget@juliamorgan.org or by calling 845-8542, ext. 302. Visit the Web site at www.juliamorgan.org for more details.

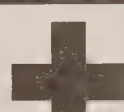
Music

Sing-Along Messiah, a cooperative

community event for the benefit of Habitat for Humanity and American Red Cross takes place at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 21, at Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Avenue, Kensington. Soloists and orchestra conducted by Arlene Sagan. Suggested donation: \$10. Bring your own score; there will also be some available to rent. For more information, call Dottie Kemp at 526-6752.

Classes

Albany Adult School offers Chinese, Dutch, French, and Spanish this quarter. Meet in the evening once a week. A few are offered on a noon basis. Meet at 800 Sycamore Ave. in Albany, or across the street at the Albany Middle School. The \$48 plus books. Call 559-6580 for information.



American Red Cross

To help those in need...

Donate Your Vehicle

Tax Deductible - No DMV hassle
The call is free and so is the pick-up!

1-866-7-REDCROSS
(1-866-773-3276)

Cars, Boats & RVs

DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT

PARKWAY NEW YEAR'S EVE PAJAMA JAM!

The Parkway is proud to host yet another New Year's Eve bash, this time with a "pajama party" theme, which means patrons are encouraged to bring their PJs and negligees and leave their inhibitions at home! The featured film is the 1978 '50s musical smash GREASE starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John, followed by a wild and wacky Dance Party with various popcorn, candy and home-baked desserts, plus beer and wine! In addition, there will be a variety of tasty specials served at the Parkway Pajama Jam.

Cost: \$30, advance tickets go on sale at Parkway box office only beginning Sunday, December 2, 5:15 p.m. 21 and over only.

When: Monday, December 31, 2001, 7:30 p.m. - Tuesday, January 1, 2002, 2 a.m.

Location: 1834 Park Boulevard,

Lake Merritt, Oakland

Theater hotline: 510-814-2400.

Web site: www.picturepubpizzeria.com

The theater is conveniently located one mile off the Park Boulevard exit of the 580 freeway.

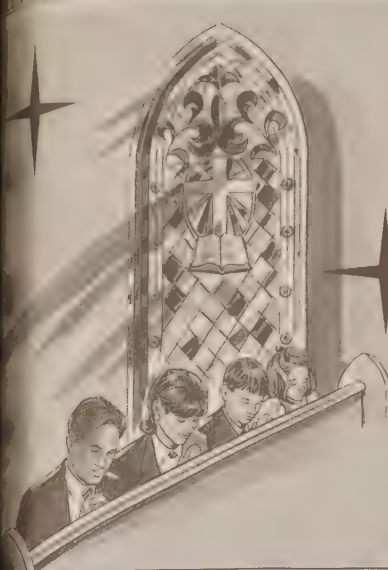
\$5 All shows • Must be 21 due to alcohol sales.

PARKWAY

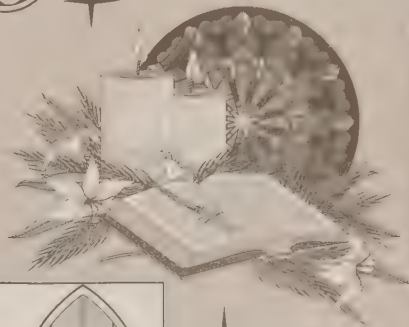
Saturday Matinee • 2:00 p.m. • \$5

Mon. - Babes Welcome

Wed. - 21+ • \$5 • \$10 • \$15 • \$20 • \$25 • \$30 • \$35 • \$40 • \$45 • \$50 • \$55 • \$60 • \$65 • \$70 • \$75 • \$80 • \$85 • \$90 • \$95 • \$100 • \$105 • \$110 • \$115 • \$120 • \$125 • \$130 • \$135 • \$140 • \$145 • \$150 • \$155 • \$160 • \$165 • \$170 • \$175 • \$180 • \$185 • \$190 • \$195 • \$200 • \$205 • \$210 • \$215 • \$220 • \$225 • \$230 • \$235 • \$240 • \$245 • \$250 • \$255 • \$260 • \$265 • \$270 • \$275 • \$280 • \$285 • \$290 • \$295 • \$300 • \$305 • \$310 • \$315 • \$320 • \$325 • \$330 • \$335 • \$340 • \$345 • \$350 • \$355 • \$360 • \$365 • \$370 • \$375 • \$380 • \$385 • \$390 • \$395 • \$400 • \$405 • \$410 • \$415 • \$420 • \$425 • \$430 • \$435 • \$440 • \$445 • \$450 • \$455 • \$460 • \$465 • \$470 • \$475 • \$480 • \$485 • \$490 • \$495 • \$500 • \$505 • \$510 • \$515 • \$520 • \$525 • \$530 • \$535 • \$540 • \$545 • \$550 • \$555 • \$560 • \$565 • \$570 • \$575 • \$580 • \$585 • \$590 • \$595 • \$600 • \$605 • \$610 • \$615 • \$620 • \$625 • \$630 • 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Share the Glory of Christmas



Bethlehem Lutheran Church
invites you to celebrate
this Christmas Season

Christmas Eve
Candlelight Carol Service
7 pm

Christmas Day
Festival Eucharist
10 am

Come join in the
music and fellowship!

3100 Telegraph Avenue
(Telegraph and Prince)
Berkeley (510) 848 8821

You are invited to a **Candlelight Christmas Eve Service**
Monday, December 24, 2001
8:00pm

Skylight Community Church
United Church of Christ
540 Skyline Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94619
(510) 531-8212

Christmas

You are invited to
Christmas
at
Montclair United Methodist Church
2162 Mountain Blvd.
Oakland 531-8208

Monday, December 24
5 p.m. Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
for Families

Loving childcare is provided.

Christmas Eve at Northbrae Community Church

5:00pm - Children's Service with a play, stories and carols
10:00pm - Candlelight Service of music, poetry and sacred words to open the heart to the joy of Christmas

A non-denominational church that welcomes people from diverse religious heritages.
941 The Alameda, Berkeley • 526-3805
between Marin & Solano

Come Back! Come Home! Come share the Holiday Season and a renewed spirit of community and stewardship, as we return to our restored landmark building!

St. Leo the Great Roman Catholic Church
Piedmont Avenue at Ridgeway (510) 654-6177

CHRISTMAS EVE (Monday)
Eucharistic Liturgy: Family Celebration
Eucharistic Liturgy with choir
5:00 pm
7:30 pm

CHRISTMAS DAY (Tuesday)
Eucharistic Liturgy
Eucharistic Liturgy
8:30 am
11:00 am

NEW YEAR'S DAY (Tuesday)
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (not a Holy Day of Obligation)
Eucharistic Liturgy
12:10 pm

REGULAR SCHEDULE OF WORSHIP
Eucharistic Liturgies: Sundays 8:30 am & 11 am Weekdays: 12:10 pm Monday to Friday
Saturdays: 8 am and 5 pm Vigil

Come celebrate the birth of light and love in our world!

CHRISTMAS EVE Festival of Lights WORSHIP SERVICE

5:30 p.m.
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Rev. Lois Mueller, Minister

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4000 Redwood Rd., Oakland, CA 94619 • (510) 531-5244
(located on the hill next to Lincoln Square/Balew)

Sunday, December 23 9:00 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
- Services of Celebration

Monday, December 24 5:00 p.m.
- Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, December 25 6:00 a.m.
- Traditional Christmas Morning Celebration

All services are in the church sanctuary
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2001 Christmas Mass Schedule

CHRISTMAS EVE
Monday, December 24th
Family Mass 5:00 p.m.
Christmas Carols 10:00 p.m.
Mass 10:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS DAY
Tuesday, December 25th
8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY
Saturday, December 29th
5:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 30th
8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

NEW YEAR'S DAY
Tuesday, January 1, 2002
9:00 a.m.

Come, Discover the Real Hero of Christmas

The most important news at Christmas is not who comes down the chimney, but who came down from heaven. You're invited to either investigate with us or to celebrate the birth of God come in the flesh Jesus Christ.

All Nations Presbyterian Church
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just 3 blocks east of I-580 & Grand Avenue

Christmas Eve Service, December 24, 6:00 PM
Carols, Candlelight, Contemporary Worship, Nursery Provided, 658-7700

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH WELCOMES YOU

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

December 24, Monday
5 pm Children's Christmas Service
10:30 pm Christmas Carols
11 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Eucharist

December 25, Christmas Day
10 am Choral Eucharist

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The Rev. Dr. John H. Eastwood

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Christmas at St. John's

"If this birth happen not in me, what does it profit me? What matters is that it shall happen in me."
Meisier Eckhart

Christmas Eve, December 24, 5 pm Family Service with Eucharist and Pageant; 10 pm Christmas Carols; 10:30 pm First Eucharist of Christmas; Christmas Day, December 25, 9:30 am Eucharist, Sunday, December 30, 8 & 10 am Christmas Festival of Lessons and Carols with Eucharist (nursery and Church School 9:45 am)

St John's Episcopal Church
1707 Gouldin Road (off Thornhill)
510 339-2200

"glory to god in the highest and peace to his people on earth"

Christmas is a time for family and friends to be together. We'd be honored to have you, your family and your friends as part of our family on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services at 7:00 & 11:00 P.M.
A service of hymns and choral presentations featuring the 18th and 19th century English carols.
Zion's Senior Choir will be supplemented by members of the San Francisco Bach Choir and accompanied by bells, recorder, guitar, and organ - with a strolling minstrel and Santa Lucia.
*Toddler care available at 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Festival Service at 10:00 A.M.
A quiet celebration and reflection with traditional liturgy.

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870 Legal Notices

ORDER TO SHOW
CAUSE FOR CHANGE

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
1. Petitioner Judith Kay Christanson has filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
Present Name: Christanson to (Prior Name) Judith Kay Ray
2. THE COURT hereby grants said petition and orders said petitioner to appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause if any why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

(b) A copy of this order to Show Cause shall be furnished to the press one week for publication in the general circulation newspaper.
El Cerrito Journal
Dated November 19, 1964
LISE

Subst. December 14, 21
 28, 2001, January 4, 2002
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FAMILY LAW
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 RESPONDENT
 (Aviso al Demandando)
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 HARNAR
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 (A usted le estan
 demandando)

CASE NUMBER
(Numero del Caso)
FL 011158

After the 15 minutes and Pettit are served out of the courtroom, Pettit will file a motion for a writ of habeas corpus and seek a writ of prohibition to prevent you from doing anything to his children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs if you cannot pay the filing fee. Ask the clerk for a fee waiver form.

If you want legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately.

usted tiene 30 Días CALENDARIOS después de recibir oficialmente esta citación judicial y peticion de cumplimiento y presentarse al formulario de Respuesta (Response form) en la corte. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no

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Caring & Sharing

The horrific events of September 11th have made us all more aware of those things that we hold most dear: family, friends, sense of community, and our American way of life.

Now more than ever, during the holiday season, the less fortunate require our assistance. It is the tradition of the Bank and its employees to give as much time, encouragement, and financial help to local non-profit organizations, as possible. During 2001, we were able to contribute to over 300 worthy organizations.

We invite you to join us in supporting these non-profit organizations.

Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce
West Contra Costa Salesian Boys and Girls Club, Inc.
Richmond Lions Club
Tara Hills Recreation Association
El Cerrito Youth Baseball
American Association of University Women
John Swett High School
Berkeley-Albany YMCA
Exchange Club of Pinole
NAACP - Richmond Branch
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the East Bay
Opportunity West
Pinole Valley High School
Exchange Club of Albany-El Cerrito
Boys and Girls Club of El Sobrante
Temple Beth Hillel
City of El Cerrito
Rotary Club of El Sobrante
Kiwanis Club of Walnut Creek
Berkeley Chamber of Commerce
Neighborhood House of North Richmond
Albany Little League
Contra Costa Senior Legal Services
Diablo Valley YMCA
Active 20-30 Club of Napa Children's Charitable Fund
Richmond-Shimada Friendship Commission
Senior Outreach Services of Contra Costa
Friends of the Pinole Library
Los Cenzontles Mexican Arts Center
American Cancer Society
Christmas in April - West Contra Costa County
Serpentini International of Richmond
San Pablo Baseball Association
Boy Scouts of America
The Salvation Army
Saint John the Baptist
Pinole Chamber of Commerce
The Volunteer Center of Contra Costa
Contra Costa College Foundation
Albany High School
Wardrobe For Opportunity
Contra Costa Child Care Council
First Resort
Junior Achievement of the Bay Area, Inc.
Maya's Music Therapy Fund
City of Richmond
Bay Area Rescue Mission
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Children's Hospital Foundation (Oakland)
Fraternal Order of the Eagles
Kensington Nursery School
Rodeo Chamber of Commerce
Epilepsy Foundation of Northern California
Salesian High School
Rotary Club of Pinole
STAND! Against Domestic Violence (formerly Battered Women's Alternatives)
Carondelet High School
Richmond Art Center
Berkeley Buddhist Temple
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Richmond Chamber of Commerce
Berkeley Public Education Foundation
Richmond Museum of History
Indian Valley School
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Albany Chamber of Commerce
Richmond Elks Lodge
Kennedy-King Memorial Scholarship Fund, Ltd.
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The Wellness Community
Albany YMCA
Saint David School
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Pleasant Hill Christian School
NIAD - National Institute of Art and Disabilities
Emeryville Chamber of Commerce
East Bay Center for the Performing Arts
Kiwanis Club of Richmond
YMCA of the East Bay - West Contra Costa Branch
Solano Avenue Association
Shockers Girls Fastpitch Softball
California Waterfowl Association
Lindsay Wildlife Museum
Richmond P.A.L. - Police Activities League
El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce

Queen of the Valley Hospital Foundation
Boys and Girls Clubs of Oakland
El Cerrito High School
Contra Costa County Office of Education
The Ed. Fund - The West Contra Costa Public Education Fund
Albany Police Department
Easter Hill United Methodist Church
Washington Elementary School (Richmond)
Center for Human Development
Saint Cornelius Church
Pinole Area AARP Chapter #3553
Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.
Orinda Woman's Club
Shorebird Nature Center (City of Berkeley)
Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church
New Connections Counseling and Recovery Center
John Muir Medical Center Auxiliary
Berkeley Repertory Theatre
Iron Triangle Neighborhood Council
Kensington Community Council
Mt. Diablo Silverado Council Boy Scouts of America
Contra Costa ARC
Sutter Solano Medical Center Foundation
Saint Helena Hospital Foundation
Saint John Missionary Baptist Church
Saint Joseph Catholic Church
Saint Mary's College High School
West Contra Costa Business Development Center
West County Adult Day Care and Alzheimer's Respite Center
Willows Theatre Company (The Benefactors, Inc.)
Berkeley Community Fund
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North Richmond Missionary Baptist Church
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Pinole Seals Swim Club
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Loyal Order of Moose - Concord Lodge No. 567
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Hayward Chamber of Commerce
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COPE (Child Abuse Prevention Services of Napa, Inc. dba COPE)
Danville Mustang Soccer League
Affordable Housing Associates
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Mercy Retirement & Care Center
African American Museum and Library at Oakland
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Auto Plus

Advertising supplement to The Montclairian, The Piedmonter, The Berkeley Voice, The Journal, The Alameda Journal

Friday, December 21, 2001

Section D

Generation Gap: Olds Intrigue is a quality car for its price [D3]

Presents
to park
under tree

BY MATT NAUMAN

WRIGHT RIDER NEWSPAPERS

Buying car gifts is easy. Nearly every department and auto-parts store has fun presents for the person on your holiday shopping list who loves cars. Plus, there's a plethora of auto-related catalogs as well as those that include auto stuff and lots of other things. Don't forget about car dealerships and Web sites such as www.cheap.com when you're checking for something special. Here's a short list, broken down into a few categories, of some neat products and car gifts for this holiday season.

The Kids

Pedal cars remain an enduring classic and are enjoying something of a mild comeback. While all types of kid-size plastic and metal models are available in toy and department stores, the classic lines of models sold by Pedal Car Classics of San Mateo are wonderful. The company sells eight models, including woodies, fire trucks, steamers and pickups. The Gendron Firehouse Special weighs 45 pounds and measures 48 inches long. Made of heavy-duty metal with a powder-coat finish, it has a hood that opens, lights, a horn, adjustable pedals, real levers and rubber wheels. The Gendron Firehouse Special costs \$399-\$429. From: Pedal Car Classics, San Mateo, Calif., 877-733-2501 or www.pedalcarclassics.com



THE REDESIGNED Ford Explorer for 2002 has a new look and technological advances to deal with shortcomings of previous model.

Ford Explorer is the best-selling SUV in its class

PACHECO AUTOMOTIVE NEWS SERVICE
The new 2002 Ford Explorer couldn't have arrived at a better time. The old model's recent rash of bad publicity should be overshadowed by this all-new design. It has technological highlights that addressed the shortcomings of the old version, a vehicle that was around, in form, for 10 years.

Available in two- or four-wheel drive, in base XLS, XLT, Eddie Bauer or as our tester this week, a 4x2 in upscale Limited trim.

Outside: Compared to the

model it replaced, the Explorer's wheelbase is more than 2 inches longer and 2.5 inches wider, but the overall length remains the same.

It offers a nicely balanced look that's larger and more modern, but despite the use of an aluminum hood and fenders, it's 200 pounds heavier than the last model.

Ford designers were challenged by the company to make things easier, so the doors are taller, which makes climbing in easier.

There's a split tailgate and a lower lift-over height, so loading cargo in back is easier, too. Our

TOM HAGIN
Solo Road Test

tester came with alloy wheels and 16-inch raised white-letter tires.

Inside: The new Explorer's interior is more user-friendly than ever. Instruments are now larger and easier to read, while power-adjustable pedals and a tilt-and-telescopic steering wheel allow for a perfect fit for nearly any driver.

Changes to the suspension have allowed Ford engineers to lower the

floor, so stepping inside is also easier.

Properly contoured seats are now stuffed with denser, more supportive foam, and there's more bolstering at all the right places.

New this year is a third-row seat that gives Explorer seven-passenger capacity for the first time.

When extra cargo space is needed, the third-row seat folds flat into a well in the floor, negating the need to remove the seats.

This allows over 46 cubic feet of space, while folding the middle row of seats expands this to more than

81 cubic feet.

There are grab handles and storage bins scattered throughout the cabin, and interior sealing from the elements is improved to reduce road noise.

On the Road: Besides the fact that Ford wanted Explorer to be bigger to hold more people and cargo, a new powertrain brought a need to make the engine compartment larger as well.

The old model's 4.9-liter V-8 was a pushrod design that's been

See D3, Page D2

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00 Nissan Maxima #P10243/549304 \$17,995	99 Dodge Grand Car SE #14033A/179901 \$14,995	00 Plymouth Neon #P10255/539688 Save	01 Honda Accord LX #P10210/1008414 \$16,995	01 Town & Country LX Minivan #P10302/771844 \$16,995	01 Grand Wagon 4X4 XL-7 #P10316/108776 \$13,995

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GENERAL MOTORS/OLDSMOBILE

OLDSMOBILE SILHOUETTE offers luxury appointments, entertainment system for rear passengers and good gas mileage. One safety feature missing on the low-end GL, however, are rear disc brakes.

Olds Silhouette: a very sensible minivan

PACHECO AUTOMOTIVE NEWS SERVICE

Mikele: I know that the sport-utility vehicle is the second hottest item on the American market but being the practical type, I much prefer the good old minivan.

For the same size vehicle, the owner gets lots better gas mileage, more seating capacity, and it's easier to drive and easier to get into and out of.

The newer ones have two rear sliding doors and three-passenger third row seats that are adequate if not comfortable.

The Oldsmobile Silhouette is one of these and it's more or less the luxury line of the three General Motors' minivan clones.

The original Silhouette of 1990 was an odd machine with a long, pointed nose that looked like a cross between the shuttle craft of the "Star Trek" TV series and a hand-sized vacuum cleaner.

This new one came out in 1997 and is much more conventional.

Brendan: It must be hard to make a minivan that doesn't look like all the other brands on the street and I guess it's because they have to fit a formula.

The Silhouette is powered by the venerable 3.4-liter GM low-tech motor that's been in the stable for many, many years. But it's a reliable old workhorse and minivan buyers are more interested in practicality and comfort items than they are in glitzy technology.

It's front-wheel drive, of course, and for the first time, it can be had with a full-time all-wheel-drive system but only on the two upper-level models.

If there's a difference in the rotational speeds of the front and rear wheels, it kicks in with power to either or both of the rear wheels and the driver doesn't even know it has happened.

Mikele: With only 185 horsepower to pull around a 3,500-pound vehicle, the Silhouette is not a pavement-burner but it gets along OK.

And if the passenger list includes a load of kids in the rear, there's also an optional entertainment system that shows DVDs on a screen

BRENDAN/MIKELE HAGIN Gender Gap

that swings down from the roof section just in back of the front seats.

The system also has a rear-seat-only AM/FM radio system that plays CDs and audio cassettes. It has a couple of earphones that can be plugged in so that those up front don't have to listen to what's being shown or played in back.

That would have been a great accessory for your folks when all you Hagins were little.

Brendan: The only hassle might have been over what we were going to watch and which of us seven would get those earphones.

The rear area also has its own heat and air conditioning controls but I don't think we'd have fought over that.

There are three versions of the Silhouette this year. Our GL is the baseline model and has all the normal accommodations like 15-inch steel wheels and basic tires — although our tester came with 16-inch alloys.

Fog lamps are standard on all the Silhouettes and so is a roof rack, halogen headlamps, and heated outside mirrors that fold away.

The GLS is the next step up and it has fancier interior trappings like leather upholstery. The top of the line is the Premiere model which comes with everything but a chauffeur.

Mikele: The Silhouette can be had with a factory trailer towing kit and that makes sense on a machine that's designed around family use.

The all-wheel drive system makes launching and retrieving a ski boat lots easier on a slippery boat ramp.

It's only good for up to 3,500 pounds so the family will have to use something else to pull the home-away-from-home house trailer.

I'm surprised that there are air bags only for the front seats and

that the front-drive GL has drum brakes on the rear while the upper two models have rear disc brakes.

Safety should always be the prime consideration.

Disc brakes in the rear work better and they should be on all these Oldsmobile minivans.

Brendan: Oldsmobile is shutting down altogether in 2004 and it's already begun to eliminate the name from public view.

It's disbanded its motorsports program and the various amateur and professional golfing tournaments that carried the Oldsmobile name have been transferred over to Cadillac and Buick.

Mikele: Nothing lasts forever, Bren, and I guess that applies to automobile makes, too.

Gifts

FROM PAGE D1

■ **The Travel & Play Travel Tray** is as much for mom and dad as it is for the kids.

It fits around a young child in the backseat of a car or on an airplane and attaches with Velcro, said Gail Rotstein, a mother and owner of the Encino company.

Made of easy-to-clean nylon, the tray gives a child a place to play, or draw, or eat. Then, it folds up and fits into a bag.

The Travel & Play Travel Tray
From: Travel Play Co.
How much: \$23.95
Where: www.travelplayco.com

Patriot Games

At the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Week trade show earlier this fall, the floor of the Las Vegas Convention Center was awash with red, white and blue car products.

You could find everything from tire-valve caps to pickup truck hitch posts to steering wheels covered in American flags or American colors.

■ **Frogworks International** now sells a couple of patriotic Tenna Toys replacement antennas. Two of them have American flags, while another features "USA" with an eagle. The antennas are solid steel and the designs are either laser-carved or die-stamped.

Tenna Toys American flag antenna

From: Frogworks International
How much: \$24
Where: Auto Zone or www.frogworks.com

■ **The best thing about the flag-pattern Patriot Shield** from EGR is that part of the profits from its sales will be donated to a fund for the families of police or firefighters killed

in New York City on Sept. 11.

The acrylic shield protects the hoods and windshields of full-size trucks, including the Ford F-150 and the Chevy Silverado, from rocks and other flying objects.

Patriot Truck Shield
From: EGR
How much: \$100
Where: Auto-part stores or 909-923-7075

On the Go

Several companies are now selling tents specifically designed to fit onto the back of a pickup truck. I'm not sure what that says about the current state of America's campgrounds, but these innovative products provide owners with great flexibility.

■ **Napier Enterprises**, which also sells a camouflage-pattern truck tent, has produced the Sportz II Truck Tent. It's designed to work with the tail-gate down, to give two more feet of sleeping and storage room. It's sold in seven sizes.

Napier also offers a \$25 Sportz Canopy, which offers shade and privacy.

Another company, Enel of Colorado, sells the Adventure Truck Tent for \$289. Information can be found at www.adventuretrucktent.com

Sportz II Truck Tent
From: Napier Enterprises
How much: \$170
Where: 800-567-2434

■ **For those who travel with dogs**, the Bedwaggin' from Speed Weasel, is a solid choice in pet carriers. The Cupertino company builds the Bedwaggin' out of one-piece, heavy-duty plastic with a stainless-steel door.

It comes in three colors, including blue, and has mounting bars to attach it to a truck bed. Next year the company will produce versions for smaller and larger dogs.

It's designed to fit onto the back of a pickup truck. I'm not sure what that says about the current state of America's campgrounds, but these innovative products provide owners with great flexibility.

Bedwaggin' Pet carrier
From: Speed Weasel
How much: \$239-329
Where: www.bedwaggin.com

Stocking Stuffers

■ **Helium** is a popular stocking stuffer. It's a small, inflatable, helium-filled balloon that can be used as a decoration or a gift.

Helium
From: Helium
How much: \$1.99
Where: 800-567-2434

■ **The Danbury Mint** cast models for those who like their kids to touch them. The 1:24 General Lee Dukes of Hazzard is \$135, or a 1:24 48 Ford convertible for \$112.

They even have a shark model. The Sharks aren't among the available National Hockey teams.

You can, however, get a shark model. The Sharks aren't among the available National Hockey teams. The Sharks aren't among the available National Hockey teams.

Sharks
From: The Danbury Mint
How much: \$116
Where: 800-493-2634

Classic racing cars inspire new line of Hot Wheels

BY JOHN O'DELL
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Bruce Meyer has been collecting classic cars since 1964, along the way scoring blue ribbons at the prestigious Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance and other major shows for the meticulously restored hot rods and race cars in which he specializes.

Mattel Inc.'s Hot Wheels unit has been making die-cast replicas of cars almost as long as Meyer, who lives in the Los Angeles area, has been collecting the real things.

The company has produced more than 2 billion of its tiny but realistic Hot Wheels vehicles since 1968, fueling a mania among hobbyists who buy and trade the scale-model cars for many times their similarly scaled-down sticker prices.

It would seem only natural for these two forces in car collecting to come together.

And so it is that Mattel has turned a quartet of famous racers from Meyer's garage into a set of Hot Wheels collectibles.

Tens of thousands of enthusiasts have built Hot Wheels collections, letting the toymaker's models stand in for famous cars and trucks they could never afford full-size.

In fact, notes Carson Lev, director of design for Hot Wheels racing and collector products, the Mattel unit divides itself into two business groups: the kids' side, with cars stamped out as children's toys and priced about \$1 each; and the adult side, which produces collectible scale models for marquee ranging from Chevrolet to Ferrari as well as collector sets of historic vehicles, famous race cars and other vehicles of significance.

One popular line has been a series of four-car sets of classic vehicles.

More than 30 of them have been produced, including several that feature vintage race cars, and now the Meyer Gallery quartet will join their

ranks.

Meyer's four cars are the So-Cal Speed Shop Belly Tank dry-lake racer built in 1952 by shop founder Alex Kydias; the Agajanian Special Indy car that won the 1952 Indianapolis 500; the Pierson brothers' 1934 Ford 3-Window Coupe, a dry-lake racer that set a class speed record of 152 mph in 1952 and achieved a best-ever top speed of 227.33 mph in 1991 with a heavily modified Chevrolet V-8 under the hood; and the Greer/Black/Prudhomme full-body dragster that gave

National Hot Rod Association star Don Prudhomme his first top-fuel ride and has the best record in drag racing's top fuel class with 237 victories in 241 starts.

Lev says the \$39.95 set is the last four-car collection Hot Wheels will make, as it turns its focus to single- and two-vehicle collectible models in the future.

Although the individual Hot Wheels collector cars cost as little as \$8 when new, demand for highly collectible models can send prices soaring.

A rare Hot Wheels beach bomb VW bug, an early 1970s recently sold for a \$72,000.

Mattel even operates a www.hotwheelscollectors.com website for collectors to trade their acquisitions at an ever-changing value.

The company's known Hot Wheels collection has more than 10,000 items, has been appraised at \$1 million.

Infiniti pushing luxury and performance

NEWSDAY

The top-of-the-line Q45 car from the luxury division of Nissan is new and on sale.

This third-generation Q has a new 32-valve, 340-horsepower, 4.5-liter V-8 engine, new styling, revised front suspension geometry and an all-new multitank rear suspension.

Infiniti says the body is 40 percent more rigid than that of its predecessor and has a longer wheelbase for increased interior and trunk space.

Also new is a multifunction 7-

inch LCD touch-screen video display with available navigation and rearview monitor systems and laser-based cruise control that maintains a set distance from the car ahead.

Meanwhile, the I35, formerly the I30, sports a new designation to reflect its larger and more powerful engine, a V-6 engine displacing 3.5 liters and producing 260 horsepower.

Infiniti says the I35 also has a strengthened four-speed electronically controlled automatic transmission, larger front disc brakes

with ABS and Brake Assist, revised exterior and interior and amenities new stereo.

A traction control system is available with Vehicle Dynamic Control. The smaller Q20 sedan has minor changes for 2002, the QX4 SUV.

The division is promoting high-performance sedans in the spring as a 2002 rate a car-based SUV as an alternative future date.

OLDSMOBILE SILHOUETTE GL

Suggested Retail	\$26,905
Price as Tested	\$29,460
Engine Type	OHV 12-valve 3.4-liter V-6 w/SMFI*
Engine Size	207 cid/3350 cc
Horsepower	185 @ 5,200 rpm
Torque	210 @ 4,000 rpm
Transmission	Four-speed automatic
Curb Weight	3,948 pounds
Fuel Capacity	14.3 gallons
Tires	(F/R) P225/60R16
Brakes	(F/R) Disc (ABS)/disc (ABS)
Drive Train	Front-engine/front-wheel drive
Vehicle Type	Seven-passenger/five-door
Mileage	City/highway 19/26
Maximum Towing	3,500 pounds

*Sequential multi-port fuel injection

Solo Road Test

FROM PAGE D1

around since the early '80s. It was narrow and compact, but inefficient and not as smooth as many of its competitors.

And while the base engine remains a 210-horsepower, 4.0-liter overhead-cam V-6, our tester came with Ford's optional 4.6-liter V-8.

Its 240-horsepower and 280 pound-feet of torque is not as massive as some of the latest SUV powerhouses, but it's smooth and efficient, and uses the latest in technology to maximize fuel mileage and reduce servicing visits.

This engine is not new to the Ford family, however, as it's been used as the base engine in the Expedition since that model came out several years ago.

In two-wheel-drive form, Explorer can tow up to 7,300 pounds when properly equipped. Mated to this is a smooth-shifting five-speed automatic transmission.

Behind the Wheel: Explorer's chassis remains separate from the body, but no longer does it have the same layout as the pickup truck.

Leading the way in advancements is an independent rear sus-

pension that replaces the old version's solid rear axle. The new frame is nearly flat from end-to-end, which affords it lower bumpers to line up with car bumpers for improved crash friendliness.

Chassis stiffness has been increased 350 percent, thanks to fully boxed frame rails instead of the C-channels of the older model.

Up front, a switch to coil-over shocks from the old version's torsion bar suspension, along with liberal doses of lightweight alloy and longer control arms have improved steering feel from its rack-and-pin-

ion steering system, and contributed to a shorter turning radius. Larger disc brakes have been added as well, and fitted with a four-wheel anti-lock braking system (ABS).

Safety: Dual dashboard airbags ABS and side-impact door beams are standard; side curtain airbags optional.

Options: Pearl Clearcoat paint, \$20; 4.6-liter engine, \$695; running boards, \$395; side curtain airbags, \$495; auxiliary climate controls, \$610; reverse sensing system, \$255; third row seat, \$670.

FORD EXPLORER LIMITED 4X2

Suggested Retail	\$32,090
Price as Tested	\$35,775
Engine Type	SOHC 16-valve 4.6-liter V-8 w/SMFI*
Engine Size	245 cid/4009 cc
Horsepower	245 @ 4,750 rpm
Torque	280 @ 4,000 rpm
Transmission	Five-speed automatic
Curb Weight	4,099 pounds
Fuel Capacity	22.5 gallons
Tires	(F/R) P245/70R16
Brakes	(F/R) Disc (ABS)/disc (ABS)
Drive Train	Front-engine/two-wheel drive
Vehicle Type	Seven-passenger/five-door
Mileage	City/highway 14/19
Maximum Towing	7,300 pounds

*Sequential multi-port fuel injection

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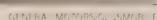
Suggested Retail	\$27,892
As Tested	\$28,502
Engine Type	DOHC 36-valve 3.5-liter V-6 w/SMPI*
Engine Size	211 cid/3473 cc
Horsepower	215 @ 5,600 rpm
Torque	230 @ 4,400 rpm
Transmission	Four-speed automatic
Fuel Capacity	14.3 gallons
Tires	(F/R) P225/60R16 all-weather
Brakes	(F/R) Disc (ABS)/disc (ABS)
Steering	Front-engine/front-wheel drive
Vehicle Type	Five-passenger/four-door
MSRP	City/highway 19/28

1954

RACHECO AUTOMOTIVE
NEWS SERVICE

R.M. Seattle, Wash.

Bob: All Intrigues have full-function traction control as standard equipment, which makes driving in snow and on icy roads less harrowing.



The lesser models, the GX and GL versions can be ordered with

The only item that's slightly disturbing is the lack of any kind of a

Matt: The interior is fairly nondescript, too, but there's no denying that it's pretty luxurious.

Matt: The Olds Intrigue isn't really very intriguing, Dad, but it does its job pretty well while giving a lot of comfort, too. I enjoyed my week in it.

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America's Car & Truck Store

Neighborhood carts give new life to electric vehicles

PACHECO AUTOMOTIVE NEWS SERVICE

Crash testing isn't necessary and



BOB HAGIN

most don't even have doors.

The reason for this potential proliferation of neighborhood electrics is that some states like California have mandated that a prescribed number of zero-emission vehicles be in an automaker's mix of vehicles and this means electric power.

Most of the major automakers have produced full-sized passenger cars using electric power but public acceptance is low and sales have been dismal.

We've personally tested electrics from GM, Ford, Honda and Toyota, and while they're fun to drive and surprisingly quick, they have a short range (65 to 100 miles on a charge) and if the driver runs out of power

on the road, the auto club truck driver can't come by with a can of electricity.

Another problem for the major manufacturers is that the production of full-sized electric-powered family sedans is a losing proposition. They can't sell enough of them to have an impact on the mix that state governments are going to require and each one costs more to make and market than their selling price.

Various electric automakers have undertaken several innovative strategies to get their electrics on the road. Renting an electric at a mass-transit interurban train station, driving it home to be kept overnight and then returned the next morning has been tried.

While an electric motor pool is good idea, it proved to be very cumbersome in such areas as liability, and the retrieval of stranded or damaged cars became problematic.

The standard fare neighborhood electric car is, by definition, barred from highway travel by its built-in

restricted top speed but other fringe manufacturers have bypassed this problem by the simple expediency of designing their machines around three wheels rather than four.

Corbin Motors, a subsidiary of a Southern California motorcycle accessory maker, produces the Sparrow, a single-seater coupe that sports a canopy that raises and lowers like that of a fighter aircraft.

The company rationale behind the singular seating capacity is that 87 percent of American commuters drive 18 miles or less to work and 97 percent of these drivers are alone.

The reasoning is sound and the only qualm a commuter might have is sharing the highway with some very massive machinery.

By legally being designated a motorcycle, a high-speed three-wheel electric vehicle isn't required to undergo federal crash testing.

While Ford and DaimlerChrysler are in the game in a big way, the development and production of low-speed electric vehicles has been

undertaken in many other countries, too, and in most cases, they're small operations.

The concept is popular in countries with crowded urban areas and high gasoline prices. Companies in Germany, Canada, Japan, Korea and China are all making the small vehicles.

A Swiss company produces a vehicle that is electrically powered but has the added attraction of having a pedal system that can supplement its tiny electric motor when the going gets tough.

Called the Twike, the unique vehicle is currently being marketed in the Seattle area. It's a sort of cosmopolitan version of pedal/electric rickshaws that are popular in other countries.

Being conservative by nature, the insurance industry is adamant in its opposition to slow-speed electric vehicles, stating that their lack of conventional safety standards undermines its hard-won victories in the field.

Other heavy-hitters in the public safety field are also vociferous

in their opposition. Joan Gavett, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Web site, says:

On the same strong statement, Gavett says the electric vehicle is a "new technology" and "not a proven technology." She also says that "the electric vehicle is not a proven technology."

With chapters all over the country, the organization is now being heard loudly.

But the industry's strong stance is not enough to overcome the industry's resistance. Forward by a group called the Electric Vehicle Association, one way or another, be an electric vehicle after a

California leads way with mandate for zero-emission cars

BY JOHN O'DELL

LOS ANGELES TIMES

As California gets set to launch its unprecedented Zero-Emission Vehicle Mandate, two key East Coast states that once marched with it in a united effort to push development of electric-powered and other nonpolluting vehicles are falling behind.

The result could be a delay of several years in the launch of zero-emission vehicles in New York and Massachusetts.

Those states, along with Vermont, had adopted California's 2003 ZEV Mandate as their own under a federal law that sets California's emissions standards — the nation's toughest — as the alternative to the lesser federal requirements.

But now, New York and Massachusetts air-quality officials are proposing a revised program that could delay introduction of zero-emission vehicles in major Northeast markets until 2007.

And to the dismay of many in the environmental and electric car communities, the states are acting with the encouragement of the California Air Resources Board.

In lieu of the battery-powered electric cars and trucks that so far are the only vehicles that can claim zero emissions at the tailpipe, the two states would encourage use of technologies such as hybrid gasoline-electric vehicles and low-sulfur diesel fuel for truck engines.

Environmentalists view the delay as capitulation to an auto industry that has largely repudiated battery-powered electrics and is lobbying instead for acceptance of vehicles such as the Toyota Prius and Honda Insight hybrids, which offer high fuel

economy and qualify as ultra-low-emission vehicles yet still burn hydrocarbons.

"To the extent the CARB might have encouraged the Northeast program and the delay, well, we disagree," said Sandra A. Spellisci, general counsel for the California Planning & Conservation League in Sacramento.

"We've always thought that having the Northeast states go along with California is important," she said. "We do need the economies of scale, especially as California's program has been scaled back."

Imposing a ZEV requirement simultaneously in California and the Northeast would help foster national interest in electric cars and trucks, said Roland Hwang, senior transportation policy analyst for the Natural Resources Defense Council in San Francisco.

California alone accounts for 10 percent of U.S. car sales; the three Northeast states would double the size of the market that would be exposed to electric vehicles.

The delay being proposed in the Northeast stunned many, including Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, an enthusiast of electric vehicles who has insisted that his state adhere to the California standards.

"California's rules still do have requirements for some electric vehicles, so they are better than nothing," Dean said in a lukewarm endorsement of the complex ZEV Mandate that has gone through numerous changes in the face of heavy auto-industry lobbying in the last two years.

Getting true zero-emission vehicles onto the roads "is the key to a long-term strategy to rein in vehicle emissions," said Pe-

ter Iwanowicz, environmental health director for the American Lung Association of New York.

"Any delay is a setback," he said. "Our reading of this plan is that now the automakers can get away from doing anything in advanced technology — battery electric vehicles, fuel cells, hybrids — until 2007" in New York and Massachusetts.

But officials in California say delaying the ZEV mandate in the East is a necessary strategy.

Members of the California Air Resources Board are "concerned about the potential for problems if we have a (bicoastal) roll-out of the ZEV mandate in 2003, so the board has encouraged me and others in the staff to work with the other states to ensure a successful roll-out," said the board's executive officer, Mike Kenny.

"It would be a problem if we didn't have a staggered start," he said. "We need California to go first and have the Northeast states follow a couple of years later."

The concern is that an unprepared public might reject alternative vehicles, said board spokesman Jerry Martin.

"The thing we are most afraid of is some sort of failure at start-up, so some of the issues that the automakers bring up are real," he said, referring to their arguments for postponing sales of battery electric vehicles outside California.

"California has a large number of electric vehicle recharging sites because the utilities here have been preparing for ZEVs for some time," Martin said. "And the public in California is more familiar with electric cars. We've been bombarding them

Use of credits for electric vehicles scrutinized

LOS ANGELES TIMES

California's air quality regulators, responding to growing concerns about possible lengthy delays in the introduction of full-service electric vehicles under the state's Zero-Emission Vehicle Mandate, have moved to restrict automakers' use of credits for early introduction of small, low-speed neighborhood electric cars.

Under the ZEV Mandate as currently written, automakers can leverage relatively inexpensive neighborhood electric vehicles by introducing them in 2002, when each one will earn four credits that can be banked for use in offsetting ZEV requirements in future years.

Neighborhood electric vehicles, or NEVs, typically have a range of less than 30 miles per charge and, given their top speeds of 25 mph, are barred from streets with speed limits in excess of 35 mph. Most look a lot like oversized golf carts, although all are more crash-worthy and mechanically far more sophisticated.

Under one scenario, a company that pushed thousands of neighborhood electrics into the state next year could earn enough credits to relieve it of having to produce any other type of zero-emission vehicle for a decade or more.

But an amendment to the mandate posted on the California Air Resources Board's Web site would prohibit automakers from using the early introduction credits to eliminate all other ZEV requirements after 2005.

The amendment would allow automakers to use accumulated credits to offset no more than 75 percent of their entire ZEV requirement in the 2006 model year and no more than 50 percent in 2007 and beyond.

Every major manufacturer that sells new passenger cars and light trucks in California has filed a plan for complying with the ZEV Mandate.

And, rumors have persisted that DaimlerChrysler, which owns a neighborhood electric vehicle manufacturer, Global Electric Motors of Fargo, N.D., is planning to dump 14,000 of the cart-type vehicles into the market next year.

That massive early introduction would permit DaimlerChrysler to collect credits for 56,000 ZEVs and relieve it of further ZEV requirements in California until 2010 or later.

The German-American automaker could even sell some of its accumulated ZEV credits to other companies because the rules permit buying, selling and trading.

Ken Montler, Global Electric Motors' president, said it won't happen — that the rumor of a plot to circumvent the mandate has no basis.

When DaimlerChrysler acquired Global

Electric last year, Montler said, its board of directors gave him three criteria: "They told me to respond to the ZEV Mandate, to build a sustaining business and to be profitable. 'If I flood the market next year, I will destroy it. And if I destroy it, then I can't have a sustaining business or a profitable one.'"

That's all well and good, proponents of clean cars say, but not as a substitute for building more costly — but ultimately more beneficial — full-service electric vehicles that owners will be able to use as replacements for today's gas-powered cars

This Weekend!

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2002 Passat GLX \$27,777 15 Passat GLX's available at this price. Any GLX with a MSRP of \$30,325 or less. Sample ID 18335, 18336, 22068, 22012, 13380

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18. Toyota of Berkeley Area C
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ACCOUNTANT
Walnut Creek CPA firm seeks experienced accountant to work full-time during the busy tax season. Flexible hours in the office. Ability to prepare both financial statements & tax returns. Great opportunity for motivated individual. Computer proficient. Competitive salary. Fax resume to: C. Kelsch 925-933.9167

ACCOUNTING AP/CLERK

Process, review, batch and input invoices. Maintain data system for invoice detail. Process payments handle cust. inv. inquiries. Detail oriented with solid computer skills. ATN Architects & Engineers 3660 Blackhawk Rd Danville CA 94506. pcalleas@attias.com

ACCOUNTING/BKPKING
Asst. Pk. 15-20 hrs/wk. Accrue, bookkeeping, QuickBooks exp. & not req'd. \$12/hr (925) 370-9788

ACCOUNTING/Controller

Flooring Solutions Inc. Livermore seeks exp. Financial Officer. Salary, bnf's, & bonus. Fax res. to Rick at 925-294-5208

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ACCOUNTING

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Sr. Cost Accountant... To \$26/Hr
Must be able to analyze cost accounting system.
Mortgage Loan closer... To \$24/Hr
2 yrs mortgage loan exp. Conv. & ARM essential.
Staff Acct'g... To \$20/Hr
1-2 yrs. Payroll and state payroll exp.
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ACCOUNTING

DIVISION CONTROLLER
(800K-850K/yr)
Must have exp. at least 5 yrs. Prof. Accounting exp. w/ publicly held Co. Must have managed an Accounting Team. Must have exp. with the closing process. Knowledge in Accounting for Acquisitions a plus. Waste or Transportation on exp. a plus.
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NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE

ACCOUNTING High-Tech firm in San Ramon seeking acctg. mgr. w/exp. in fin. statements, payroll & insurance. Quickbooks helpful. Email: Chaney@egne.com or Fax to (925) 382-1717

ACCOUNTING REP

Needed for small vantage repair facility in Benicia. Exp. required in gen. accounting including payables, receivables & reconciliations. Handles phones & office duties. Must have computer skills including Word & Excel. Send resume & salary req's to donna.romano@ctanet.com or fax to (713) 673-0754

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250 Help Wanted

ACCOUNTING MANAGER

Prints Plus, a national retailer headquartered in Concord CA, seeks an Accounting Mgr. to join our team & direct the organization's general acctg. functions

Will be responsible for managing general acctg. staff of 25, producing financial statements, periodic end close, taxes, budgets, forecasts, internal auditing & treasury. Min 3 yrs. acctg/finance exp. at a mgr. level with strong computer skills including EXCEL, rec'd. Retail & JOE exp. a plus.

Prints Plus offers a casual business environment, team-oriented atmosphere, exciting challenges & competitive benefits pkg. Send resume & salary req's to: Prints Plus, Inc. VP Adm. & Control, 2600 Silex Ln. Bldg 200, Concord CA 94520. Fax 925-880-1299. Email: jfrank@prints-plus.com. www.prints-plus.com

250 Help Wanted

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

Established W.C. CPA firm needs CPA or cand date w/ 3-5 yrs. public acctg. exp. Send resume & salary req's to work independently. Email: jfrank@prints-plus.com. www.prints-plus.com

250 Help Wanted

ACCOUNT TECHNICIAN

City of Oakley, CA
Salary range: (\$3,148-\$3,777)
Full benefits and City-paid retirement. Contribution The job duties of this position will include performing accounts payable, payroll, accounts receivable and to provide a variety of support functions for the Accountant. Requirements: Two years of working experience preferably in AP & payroll. Associates degree is req'd. Send resume & cvr. letter to City of Oakley, Attn: Mary V. Cheng, 3633 Main St, Oakley, CA 94661, by Dec. 26, 2001

250 Help Wanted

ACTIVITY COORDINATOR

For upscale Senior Facility. Must have or be able to obtain Class 3 drivers license. Quickbooks helpful. Email: Chaney@egne.com or Fax to (925) 382-1717

250 Help Wanted

ADMINISTRATIVE/RECEPTIONIST

Growing, fun and friendly CPA firm seeking energetic outgoing person to fill administrative/receptionist position. Computer literacy preferred, with knowledge of Microsoft office. Will train the right person. Fax resume to: 510-521-4550

250 Help Wanted

ADMINISTRATIVE/ASST.

Provide secretarial and admin. support, handle multiple tasks & keep busy office organized. Word & Excel. \$15 to \$16

250 Help Wanted

SYSTEM 1 STAFFING

925-932-3133 932-3551 system1@ccnet.com No phone calls please

250 Help Wanted

ADMINISTRATIVE SCHEDULER

Pleasanton physician staffing co. seeks people oriented person to prepare physician work schedules. Recs. daily interaction w/ physicians, hosp's & team members. Must be team oriented, well organized & proficient in Word/Excel. Exp. working w/med. prof. Fax resume to: 925/484-4107 Attn Mark

250 Help Wanted

ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.

To Principal of Architectural firm. Fluent in Spanish. Self starter with strong verbal and written skills. Must be proficient in Word & Excel and Outlook. Min. 5 yrs. exp. Full benefits pkg. Fax resume to Mary Ann @ 925-857-2543 or e-mail to: mawadson@danlingroup.com

250 Help Wanted

ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.

Exporter in W.C. seeks exp. PT to handle shipping documents. Must be highly motivated, detail oriented, organized, computer calculator literate. Work well under pressure. Recs. excel, written/verbal skills & honest. Send resume & salary req's. Starting Sal. \$30-35K based on exp. Fax resume to: 925-932-3093

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250 Help Wanted

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Assists in performing various budget and admin. duties. Req. 60 sem./60 qtr. college units & 2 years related exp. BA may be substituted for req. and exp. may be substituted for educ. Final filing 01/11/02 925-336-1701.

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250 Help Wanted

ASBESTOS Bldg. Inspector

Must have own vehicle. Great advancement opp'ty. (510) 245-1115

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ADMINISTRATOR W.C. ofc.

Schl. equip. Excel computer skills. Fax (925) 247-0367

250 Help Wanted

ADMISSIONS DIRECTOR

This position is responsible for creating revenue, curriculum development & coordination of sales & marketing efforts. A marketing degree is desirable but not required & healthcare exp. is a plus. Please fax resume to: Michelle @ 925/506-0201

250 Help Wanted

ADMISSIONS

High School Admissions Representative to schedule & give presentations to East Bay high schools, and recruit students. Req. public speaking, local travel and sales background. Mail/Fax/Email resume to: Mary Ann @ 925-857-2543 or e-mail to: mawadson@danlingroup.com

250 Help Wanted

ADULT ED TEACHER: ESL

Proper credential required. \$23.43-\$26.11/hr. Apply Liberty Union High School District, 20 Oak St. Brentwood, 925-835-2166. EOE/Deadline: 12/28/01

250 Help Wanted

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Exp. pref'd, typing and weekends a must. 925-532-5700

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250 Help Wanted

APARTMENT Mgmt. team

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Fax: (510) 222-7499 or E-mail: brownie@reservest.com
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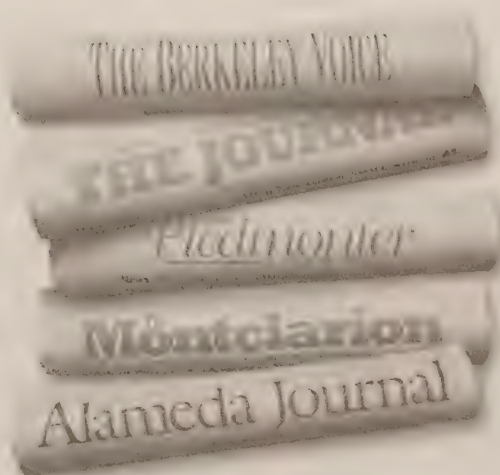
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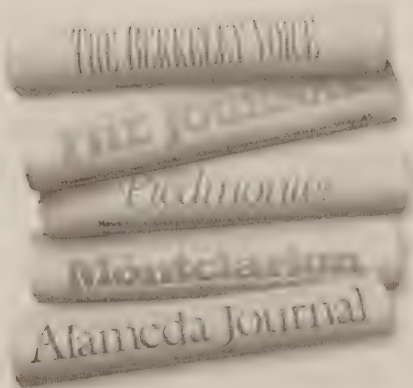
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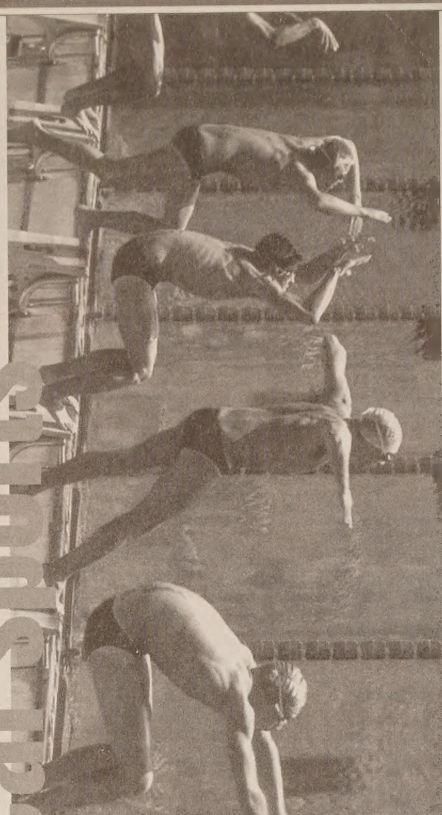
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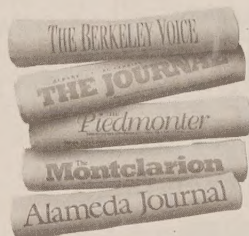
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